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THE
WORKS
OF
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD BYRON.

PRINTED BY A. BELIN.

THE
WORKS
OF
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD BYRON.

COMPREHENDING ALL HIS SUPPRESSED POEMS.

EMBELLISHED WITH A PORTRAIT AND A SKETCH OF HIS
LORDSHIP'S LIFE.

VOL. III.

ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.—POEMS.
HEBREW MELODIES.—SIEGE OF CORINTH.
PARISINA, &c.

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SECOND EDITION.  
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1819





ODE
TO
NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

« Expende Annibalem:—quot libras in duce summo
« Invenies?—

JUVENAL, Sat. X.

« The Emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the
« Senate, by the *Italians*, and by the Provincials
« of *Gaul*; his moral virtues, and military talents,
« were loudly celebrated; and those who derived
« any private benefit from his government, an-
« nounced in prophetic strains the restoration of
« public felicity.

* * * * *

* * * * *

« By this shameful abdication, he protracted his life
« a few years, in a very ambiguous state, between
« an Emperor and an Exile, till———

Gibbon's Decline and Fall, vol. 6. p. 220.

ODE.

I.

'Tis done—but yesterday a King!
And armed with King's to strive—
And now thou art a nameless thing
So abject—yet alive!
Is this the man of thousand thrones,
Who strewed our Earth with hostile bones?
And can he thus survive?
Since he, miscalled the Morning Star,
Nor man nor fiend hath fall'n so far.

II.

Ill-minded man! why scourge thy kind
Who bowed so low the knee?
By gazing on thyself grown blind,
Thou taught'st the rest to see.
With might unquestioned,—power to save—
Thine only gift hath been the grave.
To those that worshipped thee;
Nor, till thy fall, could mortals guess
Ambition's less than littleness!

III.

Thanks for that lesson—it will teach
To after-warriors more
Than high Philosophy can preach,
And vainly preached before.
That spell upon the minds of men
Breaks never to unite again,
That led them to adore
Those Pagod things of sabre-sway,
With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

IV.

The triumph, and the vanity,
The rapture of the strife!—
The earthquake shout of Victory,
To thee the breath of life;
The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
Which man seemed made but to obey,
Wherewith renown was rife—
All quelled!—Dark Spirit! what must be
The madness of thy memory!

V.

The Desolator desolate!
The Victor overthrown!

The Arbiter of others' fate
 A Suppliant for his own !
 Is it some yet imperial hope
 That with such change can calmly cope?
 Or dread of death alone ?
 To die a prince—or live a slave—
 Thy choice is most ignobly brave !

VI.

He² who of old would rend the oak,
 Dreamed not of the rebound ;
 Chained by the trunk he vainly broke,
 Alone—how looked he round?—
 Thou, in the sternness of thy strength,
 An equal deed hast done at length,
 And darker fate hast found :
 He fell, the forest-prowlers' prey ;
 But thou must eat thy heart away !

VII.

The Roman,³ when his burning heart
 Was slaked with blood of Rome,
 Threw down the dagger—dared depart,
 In savage grandeur, home.

He dared depart, in utter scorn
Of men that such a yoke had borne,
Yet left him such a doom!
His only glory was that hour
Of self-upheld abandoned power.

VIII.

The Spaniard,⁴ when the lust of sway
Had lost its quickening spell,
Cast crowns for rosaries away,
An empire for a cell;
A strict accountant of his beads,
A subtle disputant on creeds,
His dotage trifled well:
Yet better had he neither known
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

IX.

But thou—from thy reluctant hand
The thunderbolt is wrung—
Too late thou leav'st the high command
To which thy weakness clung;
All Evil Spirit as thou art,
It is enough to grieve the heart,
To see thine own unstrung;

To think that God's fair world hath been
The footstool of a thing so mean;

X.

And Earth hath spilt her blood for him,
Who thus can hoard his own!
And Monarchs bowed the trembling limb,
And thanked him for a throne!
Fair Freedom! we may hold thee dear,
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear
In humblest guise have shown.
Oh! ne'er may tyrant leave behind
A brighter name to lure mankind!

XI.

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
Nor written thus in vain—
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
Or deepen every stain.
If thou hadst died as honour dies,
Some new Napoleon might arise,
To shame the world again—
But who would soar the solar height,
To set in such a starless night?

XII.

Weighed in the balance, hero dust
Is vile as vulgar clay;
Thy scales, Mortality! are just
To all that pass away;
But yet methought, the living great
Some higher sparks should animate,
To dazzle and dismay;
Nor deemed Contempt could thus make mirth
Of these, the Conquerors of the earth.

XIII.

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,
Thy still imperial bride;
How bears her breast the torturing hour?
Still clings she to thy side?
Must she too bend? must she too share
Thy late repentance, long despair,
Thou throneless Homicide?
If still she loves thee, hoard that gem,
'Tis worth thy vanished diadem!

XIV.

Then haste thee to thy sullen Isle,
And gaze upon the sea;

That element may meet thy smile,
 It ne'er was ruled by thee!
 Or trace with thine all idle hand,
 In loitering mood, upon the sand,
 That Earth is now as free!
 That Corinth's pedagogue hath now
 Transferred his by-word to thy brow.

XV.

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage⁵
 What thoughts will there be thine,
 While brooding in thy prisoned rage?
 But one—"The world *was* mine?"
 Unless, like he of Babylon,
 All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
 Life will not long confine
 That spirit poured so widely forth—
 So long obeyed—so little worth!

XVI.

Or like the thief of fire from heaven,⁶
 Wilt thou withstand the shock?
 And share with him, the unforgiven,
 His vulture and his rock!
 Foredoomed by God—by man accurst,

And that last act, though not thy worst,
The very Fiend's arch mock ;⁷
He in his fall preserv'd his pride,
And, if a mortal, had as proudly died !

NOTES.

Note 1, page 4, line 11.

The rapture of the strife—

Certaminis *guadia*, the expression of Attila in his harangue to his army, previous to the battle of Chalons, given in Cassiodorus.

Note 2, page 5, line 8.

He who of old would rend the oak.—

Milo.

Note 3, page 5, line 17.

The Roman, when his burning heart—

Sylla.

Note 4, page 6, line 6.

The Spaniard, when the lust of sway—

Charles V.

Note 5, page 9, line 8.

Thou Timour! in his captive's cage—

The cage of Bajazet, by order of Tamerlane.

Note 6, page 9, line 17.

Or like the thief of fire from heaven—

Prometheus.

Note 7, page 10, line 2.

The very Fiend's arch mock—

« The fiend's arch mock—

« To lip a wanton, and suppose her chaste. »—

Shakespeare.

POEMS.

I.

WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.

I.

As o'er the cold sepulchral stone
Some name arrests the passer-by;
Thus, when thou view'st this page alone,
May mine attract thy pensive eye !

2.

And when by thee that name is read,
Perchance in some succeeding year,
Reflect on me as on the dead,
And think my heart is buried here.

September 14th, 1809.

II.

*To * * **

Oh Lady! when I left the shore,
The distant shore, which gave me birth;
I hardly thought to grieve once more,
To quit another spot on earth :

Yet here, amidst this barren isle,
Where panting Nature droops the head,
Where only thou art seen to smile,
I view my parting hour with dread.
Though far from Albin's craggy shore,
Divided by the dark-blue main;
A few, brief, rolling seasons o'er,
Perchance I view her cliffs again:
But wheresoe'er I now may roam,
Through scorching clime, and varied sea,
Though Time restore me to my home,
I ne'er shall bend mine eyes on thee:
On thee, in whom at once conspire
All charms which heedless hearts can move,
Whom but to see is to admire,
And, oh! forgive the word—to love.
Forgive the word, in one who ne'er
With such a word can more offend;
And since thy heart I cannot share,
Believe me, what I am, thy friend.
And who so cold as look on thee,
Thou lovely wand'rer, and be less?
Nor be, what man should ever be,
The friend of Beauty in distress?

Ah! who would think that form had past
Through Danger's most destructive path,
Have braved the death-winged tempest's blast,
And 'scaped a tyrant's fiercer wrath?
Lady! when I shall view the walls
Where free Byzantium once arose;
And Stamboul's Oriental halls
The Turkish tyrants now enclose;
Though mightiest in the lists of fame,
That glorious city still shall be;
On me 'twill hold a dearer claim,
As spot of thy nativity:
And though I bid thee now farewell,
When I behold that wond'rous scene,
Since where thou art I may not dwell,
'Twill soothe to be, where thou hast been.

September, 1809.

III.

STANZAS

*Written in passing the Ambracian Gulph,
November 14th, 1809.*

1.

THROUGH cloudless skies, in silvery sheen,
Full beams the moon on Actium's coast :
And on these waves, for Egypt's queen,
The ancient world was won and lost.

2.

And now upon the scene I look,
The azure grave of many a Romau ;
Where stern Ambition once forsook
His wavering crown to follow woman.

3.

Florence! whom I will love as well
As ever yet was said or sung,
(Since Orpheus sang his spouse from hell)
Whilst thou art fair and I am young;

4.

Sweet Florence! those were pleasant times,
When worlds were staked for ladies' eyes :

Had bards as many realms as rhymes,
Thy charms might raise new Anthonies.

5.

Though Fate forbids such things to be,
Yet, by thine eyes and ringlets curled !
I cannot lose a world for thee,
But would not lose thee for a world.

IV.

STANZAS

*Composed October 11th, 1809, during the night,
a thunder-storm; when the guides had lost
the road to Zitza, near the range of mountains
formerly called Pindus, in Albania.*

1.

CHILL and mirk is the nightly blast,
Where Pindus' mountains rise,
And angry clouds are pouring fast
The vengeance of the skies.

2.

Our guides are gone, our hope is lost,
And lightnings, as they play,

But show where rocks our path have crost,
Or gild the torrent's spray.

3.

Is yon a cot I saw, though low?
When lightning broke the gloom—
How welcome were its shade!—ah, no!
'Tis but a Turkish tomb,

4.

Through sounds of foaming waterfalls,
I hear a voice exclaim—
My way-worn countryman, who calls
On distant England's name.

5.

A shot is fired—by foe or friend?
Another—'tis to tell
The mountain-peasants to descend,
And lead us where they dwell.

6.

Oh! who in such a night will dare
To tempt the wilderness?
And who 'mid thunder peals can hear
Our signal of distress?

7.

And who that heard our shouts would rise
To try the dubious road?
Nor rather deem from nightly cries
That outlaws were abroad.

8.

Clouds burst, skies flash, oh, dreadful hour!
More fiercely pours the storm!
Yet here one thought has still the power
To keep my bosom warm.

9.

While wand'ring through each broken path,
O'er brake and craggy brow;
While elements exhaust their wrath,
Sweet Florence, where art thou?

10.

Not on the sea, not on the sea,
Thy bark hath long been gone:
Oh, may the storm that pours on me,
Bow down my head alone!

11.

Full swiftly blew the swift Siroc,
When last I press'd thy lip;

And long ere now, with foaming shock,
Impelled thy gallant ship.

12.

Now thou art safe ; nay, long ere now
Hast trod the shore of Spain ;
'Twere hard if ought so fair as thou
Should linger on the main.

13.

And since I now remember thee
In darkness and in dread,
As in those hours of revelry
Which mirth and music sped ;

14.

Do thou amidst the fair white walls,
If Cadiz yet be free,
At times from out her latticed halls
Look o'er the dark blue sea ;

15.

Then think upon Calypso's isles,
Endeared by days gone by ;
To others give a thousand smiles,
To me a single sigh.

16.

And when the admiring circle mark
The paleness of thy face,
A half formed tear, a transient spark
Of melancholy grace.

17.

Again thou'lt smile, and blushing shun
Some coxcomb's raillery;
Nor own for once thou thought'st of one,
Who ever thinks on thee.

18.

Though smile and sigh alike are vain,
When severed hearts repine,
My spirit flies o'er mount and main,
And mourns in search of thine.

Y.

Written at Athens.

JANUARY 16, 1810.

THE spell is broke, the charm is flown !
Thus is it with life's fitful fever :
We madly smile when we should groan ;
Delirium is our best deceiver.

Each lucid interval of thought
 Recals the woes of Nature's charter,
 And he that acts as wise men ought,
 But lives, as saints have died, a martyr.

VI.

Written after swimming from Sestos to Abydos.

MAY 9, 1810.

1.

If, in the month of dark December,
 Leander, who was nightly wont
 (What maid will not the tale remember?)
 To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont!

2.

If, when the wintry tempest roared,
 He sped to Hero, nothing loth,
 And thus of old thy current poured,
 Fair Venus! how I pity both!

3.

For *me*, degenerate modern wretch,
 Though in the genial month of May,
 My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,
 And think I've done a feat to-day.

4.

But since he crossed the rapid tide,
 According to the doubtful story,
 To woo,—and—Lord knows what beside,
 And swam for Love, as I for Glory;

5.

'Twere hard to say who fared the best:
 Sad mortals! thus the Gods still plague you!
 He lost his labour, I my jest:
 For he was drowned, and I've the ague.

VII.

SONG.

Ζών μὲ, σὺς ἀγαπῶ.

ATHENS, 1810.

I.

MAID of Athens, ere we part,
 Give, oh, give me back my heart!
 Or, since that has left my breast,
 Keep it now, and take the rest!
 Hear my vow before I go,

Ζών μὲ, σὺς ἀγαπῶ.

2.

By those tresses unconfined,
 Wooed by each Ægean wind;
 By those lids whose jetty fringe
 Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge;
 By those wild eyes like the roe,
 Ζών μῦ, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

3.

By that lip I long to taste;
 By that zone-encircled waist;
 By all the token-flowers³ that tell
 What words can never speak so well;
 By Love's alternate joy and woe,
 Ζών μῦ, σὰς ἀγαπῶ

4.

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
 Think of me, sweet! when alone.—
 Though I fly to Istambol⁴,
 Athens holds my heart and soul:
 Can I cease to love thee? No!
 Ζών μῦ, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

VIII.

Translation of the famous Greek War Song, *Διὶ τῇ παίδι τῶν Ἑλλήνων*, written by Riga, who perished in the attempt to revolutionize Greece. The following translation is as literal as the author could make it in verse; it is of the same measure as that of the original. See Appendix to vol. 1.

I.

Sons of the Greeks, arise!
 The glorious hour's gone forth,
 And, worthy of such ties,
 Display who gave us birth:

CHORUS.

Sons of Greeks! let us go
 In arms against the foe,
 Till their hated blood shall flow
 In a river past our feet.

2.

Then manfully despising
 The Turkish tyrant's yoke,
 Let your country see you rising,
 And all her chains are broke.
 Brave shades of chiefs and sages,
 Behold the coming strife!
 Heroes of past ages,
 Oh, start again to life!

At the sound of my trumpet, breaking
Your sleep, oh, join with me!
And the seven-hilled⁵ city seeking,
Fight, conquer, till we're free.

Sons of Greeks, etc.

3.

Sparta, Sparta, why in slumbers
Lethargic dost thou lie?
Awake, and join thy numbers
With Athens, old ally!
Leonidas recalling,
That chief of ancient song,
Who saved ye once from falling,
The terrible! the strong!
Who made that bold diversion
In old Thermopylæ,
And warring with the Persian
To keep his country free;
With his three hundred waging
The battle, long he stood,
And like a lion raging,
Expired in seas of blood.

Sons of Greeks, etc.

IX.

Translation of the Romaic Song.

« Μπινω μιν ἴσ' περίβωλι

« Ὀραϊνάλη, Χαηδὴ » &c.

The song from which this is taken is a great favourite with the young girls of Athens of all classes. Their manner of singing it is by verses in rotation, the whole number present joining in the chorus. I have heard it frequently at our « χοροί, » in the winter of 1810-11. The air is plaintive and pretty.

I.

I ENTER thy garden of roses,
 Belov'd and fair Haideé,
 Each morning where Flora reposes,
 For surely I see her in thee.
 Oh, Lovely! thus low I implore thee,
 Receive this fond truth from my tongue,
 Which utters its song to adore thee,
 Yet trembles for what it has sung;
 As the branch, at the bidding of Nature,
 Adds fragrant and fruit to the tree,
 Through her eyes, through her every feature
 Shines the soul of the young Haideé.

2.

But the loveliest garden grows hateful
When Love has abandoned the bowers ;
Bring me hemlock—since mine is ungrateful,
That herb is more fragrant than flowers.
The poison, when poured from the chalice,
Will deeply embitter the bowl ;
But when drunk to escape from thy malice,
The draught shall be sweet to my soul.
Too cruel ! in vain I implore thee
My heart from these horrors to save :
Will nought to my bosom restore thee ?
Then open the gates of the grave.

3.

As the chief who to combat advances
Secure of his conquest before,
Thus thou, with those eyes for thy lances,
Hast pierced through my heart to its core.
Ah, tell me, my soul ! must I perish
By pangs which a smile would dispel ?
Would the hope, which thou once bad'st me
cherish,
For torture repay me too well ?

Now sad is the garden of roses,
Beloved but false Haideé!
There Flora all withered reposes,
And mourns o'er thine absence with me.

X.

Written beneath a Picture

1.

DEAR object of defeated care!
Though now of Love and thee bereft,
To reconcile me with despair
Thine image and my tears are left.

2.

'Tis said with Sorrow Time can cope;
But this I feel can ne'er be true:
For by the death-blow of my Hope
My Memory immortal grew.

XI.

On Parting.

1.

THE kiss, dear maid! thy lip has left,
Shall never part from mine,

Till happier hours restore the gift
Untainted back to thine.

2.

Thy parting glance, which fondly beams,
An equal love may see :
The tear that from thine eyelid streams
Can weep no change in me.

3.

I ask no pledge to make me blest
In gazing when alone ;
Nor one memorial for a breast,
Whose thoughts are all thine own.

4.

Nor need I write—to tell the tale
My pen were doubly weak :
Oh ! what can idle words avail,
Unless the heart could speak ?

5.

By day or night, in weal or woe,
That heart, no longer free,
Must bear the love it cannot show,
And silent ache for thee.

XII.

TO THYRZA.

WITHOUT a stone to mark the spot,
And say, what Truth might well have said,
By all, save one, perchance forgot,
Ah, wherefore art thou lowly laid?
By many a shore and many a sea
Divided, yet beloved in vain;
The past, the future fled to thee
To bid us meet—no—ne'er again!
Could this have been—a word, a look
That softly said, « We part in peace, »
Had taught my bosom how to brook,
With fainter sighs, thy soul's release.
And didst thou not, since Death for thee
Prepared a light and pangless dart,
Once long for him thou ne'er shalt see,
Who held, and holds thee in his heart?
Oh! who like him had watched thee here?
Or sadly marked thy glazing eye,
In that dread hour ere death appear,
When silent Sorrow fears to sigh,

Till all was past? But when no more
'Twas thine to reck of human woe,
Affection's heart-drops, gushing o'er,
Had flowed as fast—as now they flow.
Shall they not flow, when many a day
In these, to me, deserted towers,
Ere called but for a time away,
Affection's mingling tears were ours?
Ours too the glance none saw beside;
The smile none else might understand;
The whispered thought of hearts allied,
The pressure of the thrilling hand;
The kiss so guiltless and refined
That Love each warmer wish forbore;
Those eyes proclaimed so pure a mind,
Ev'n passion blushed to plead for more.
The tone, that taught me to rejoice,
When prone, unlike thee, to repine;
The song celestial from thy voice,
But sweet to me from none but thine;
The pledge we wore—I wear it still,
But where is thine?—ah, where art thou?
Oft have I borne the weight of ill,
But never bent beneath till now!

Well hast thou left in life's best bloom
The cup of woe for me to drain.
If rest alone be in the tomb,
I would not wish thee here again;
But if in worlds more blest than this
Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,
Impart some portion of thy bliss,
To wean me from mine anguish here.
Teach me—too early taught by thee!
To bear, forgiving and forgiv'n :
On earth thy love was such to me ;
It fain would form my hope in heav'n !

XIII.

ST ANZAS.

I.

AWAY, away, ye notes of woe !
Be silent thou once soothing strain,
Or I must flee from hence, for, oh !
I dare not trust those sounds again.
To me they speak of brighter days—
But lull the chords, for now, alas !
I must not think, I may not gaze
On what I am, on what I was.

2.

2.

The voice that made those sounds more sweet
Is hushed, and all their charms are fled ;
And now their softest notes repeat
A dirge, an anthem o'er the dead !
Yes, Thyrza ! yes, they breathe of thee,
Beloved dust ! since dust thou art ;
And all that once was harmony
Is worse than discord to my heart !

3.

'Tis silent all !—but on my ear
The well-remembered echoes thrill ;
I hear a voice I would not hear,
A voice that now might well be still,
Yet oft my doubting soul 'twill shake :
Ev'n slumber owns its gentle tone,
Till consciousness will vainly wake
To listen, though the dream be flown.

4.

Sweet Thyrza ! waking as in sleep,
Thou art but now a lovely dream ;
A star that trembled o'er the deep,
Then turned from earth its tender beam.

But he, who through life's dreary way
Must pass, when heav'n is veiled in wrath,
Will long lament the vanished ray
That scattered gladness o'er his path.

XIV.
TO THYRZA.

I.

ONE struggle more, and I am free
From pangs that rend my heart in twain ;
One last long sigh to love and thee,
Then back to busy life again.
It suits me well to mingle now
With things that never pleased before :
Though every joy is fled below,
What future grief can touch me more ?

2.

Then bring me wine, the banquet bring ;
Man was not formed to live alone :
I'll be that light unmeaning thing
That smiles with all, and weeps with none.
It was not thus in days more dear,
It never would have been, but thou

Hast fled, and left me lonely here ;
Thou'rt nothing, all are nothing now.

3.

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe !
The smile that sorrow fain would wear
But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,
Like roses o'er a sepulchre.
Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel awhile the sense of ill ;
Though pleasure fires the madd'ning soul,
The heart—the heart is lonely still !

4.

On many a lone and lovely night
It soothed to gaze upon the sky ;
For then I deemed the heav'nly light
Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye ;
And oft I thought at Cynthia's noon,
When sailing o'er the Ægean wave,
« Now Thyrza gazes on that moon—»
Alas, it gleamed upon her grave

5.

When stretched on fever's sleepless bed,
And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,

“ ’Tis comfort still, ” I faintly said,
“ That Thyrza cannot know my pains: ”
Like freedom to the time-worn slave,
A boon ’tis idle then to give,
Relenting Nature vainly gave
My life, when Thyrza ceased to live!

6.

My Thyrza’s pledge in better days,
When love and life alike were new!
How different now thou meet’st my gaze!
How tinged by time with sorrow’s hue!
The heart that gave itself with thee
Is silent—ah, were mine as still!
Though cold as e’en the dead can be,
It feels, it sickens with the chill.

7.

Thou bitter pledge! thou mournful token!
Though painful, welcome to my breast!
Still, still, preserve that love unbroken,
Or break the heart to which thou’rt prest!
Time tempers love, but not removes,
More hallowed when its hope is fled:
Oh! what are thousand living loves
To that which cannot quit the dead?

XV.

EUTHANASIA.

1.

WHEN Time, or soon or late, shall bring
The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead,
Oblivion! may thy languid wing
Wave gently o'er my dying bed!

2.

No band of friends or heirs be there,
To weep, or wish, the coming blow:
No maiden, with dishevelled hair,
To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

3.

But silent let me sink to Earth,
With no officious mourners near:
I would not mar one hour of mirth,
Nor startle friendship with a fear.

4.

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour
Could nobly check its useless sighs,
Might then exert its latest power
In her who lives and him who dies.

5.

'Twere sweet, my Psyche! to the last
Thy features still serene to see :
Forgetful of its struggles past,
E'en Pain itself should smile on thee.

6.

But vain the wish—for Beauty still
Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath ;
And woman's tears, produced at will,
Deceive in life, unman in death.

7.

Then lonely be my latest hour,
Without regret, without a groan !
For thousands Death hath ceased to lower,
And pain been transient or unknown.

8.

"Ay, but to die, and go," alas!
Where all have gone, and all must go !
To be the nothing that I was
Ere born to life and living woe!

9.

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,

And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better not to be.

XVI.

STANZAS.

« Heu quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui
meminisse ! »

1.

AND thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth ;
And form so soft, and charms so rare.
Too soon returned to Earth !
Though Earth received them in her bed,
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
In carelessness or mirth,
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

2.

I will not ask where thou liest low,
Nor gaze upon the spot ;
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,
So I behold them not :
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved and long must love

Like common earth can rot ;
To me there needs no stone to tell,
'Tis nothing that I loved so well.

3.

Yet did I love thee to the last
As fervently as thou,
Who didst not change through all the past,
And canst not alter now.
The love where Death has set his seal,
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
Nor falsehood disavow :
And, what were worse, thou canst not see
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

4.

The better days of life were ours ;
The worst can be but mine :
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,
Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep ;
Nor need I to repine
That all those charms have passed away ;
I might have watched through long decay.

5.

The flower in ripened bloom unmatched
Must fall the earliest prey ;
Though by no hand untimely snatched,
The leaves must drop away :
And yet it were a greater grief
To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
Than see it plucked to-day ;
Since earthly eye but ill can bear
To trace the change to foul from fair.

6

I know not if I could have borne
To see thy beauties fade ;
The night that followed such a morn
Had worn a deeper shade :
Thy day without a cloud hath past,
And thou wert lovely to the last ;
Extinguished, not decayed ;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

7.

As once I wept, if I could weep
My tears might well be shed,

To think I was not near to keep
One vigil o'er thy bed ;
To gaze, how fondly ! on thy face,
To fold thee in a faint embrace,
Uphold thy drooping head ;
And show that love, however vain,
Nor thou nor I can feel again.

8.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
Though thou hast left me free,
The loveliest things that still remain,
Than thus remember thee !
The all of thine that cannot die
Through dark and dread Eternity,
Returns again to me,
And more thy buried love endears
Than aught, except its living years.

XVII.

STANZAS.

I.

If sometimes in the haunts of men
Thine image from my breast may fade,

The lonely hour presents again
The semblance of thy gentle shade:
And now that sad and silent hour
Thus much of thee can still restore,
And sorrow unobserved may pour
The plaint she dare not speak before.

2.

Oh, pardon that in crowds awhile,
I waste one thought I owe to thee,
And, self-condemned, appear to smile,
Unfaithful to thy Memory!
Nor deem that memory less dear,
That then I seem not to repine,
I would not fools should overhear
One sigh that should be wholly *thine*.

3.

If not the Goblet pass unquaffed,
It is not drained to banish care,
The cup must hold a deadlier draught,
That brings a Lethe for despair.
And could Oblivion set my soul
From all her troubled visions free,
I'd dash to earth the sweetest bowl
That drowned a single thought of thee.

4.

For wert thou vanished from my mind,
Where could my vacant bosom turn?
And who would then remain behind
To honour thine abandoned Urn?
No, No—it is my sorrow's pride
That last dear duty to fulfil;
Though all the world forget beside,
'Tis meet that I remember still.

5.

For well I know, that such had been
Thy gentle care for him, who now
Unmourned shall quit this mortal scene,
Where none regarded him, but thou:
And, Oh! I feel in *that* was given
A blessing never meant for me;
Thou wert too like a dream of Heaven,
For earthly Love to merit thee.

March 14th, 1812.

XVIII.

On a Cornelian Heart which was broken.

1.

ILL-FATED Heart! and can it be
That thou shouldst thus be rent in twain?
Have years of care for thine and thee
Alike been all employed in vain?

2.

Yet precious seems each shattered part,
And every fragment dearer grown,
Since he who wears thee, feels thou art
A fitter emblem of *his own*.

XIX:

(This poem and the following were written some years ago.)

To a Youthful Friend.

1.

FEW years have passed since thou and I
Were firmest friends, at least in name,
And childhood's gay sincerity
Preserved our feelings long the same.

2.

But now, like me, too well thou know'st
What trifles oft the heart recall;
And those who once have loved the most
Too soon forget they loved at all.

3.

And such the change the heart displays,
So frail is early friendship's reign,
A month's brief lapse, perhaps a day's,
Will view thy mind estranged again.

4.

If so, it never shall be mine
To mourn the loss of such a heart;
The fault was Nature's fault, not thine,
Which made thee fickle as thou art.

5.

As rolls the ocean's changing tide,
So human feelings ebb and flow;
And who would in a breast confide
Where stormy passions ever glow?

6.

It boots not, that together bred,
Our childish days were days of joy;

My spring of life has quickly fled ;
Thou, too, hast ceased to be a boy.

7.

And when we bid adieu to youth,
Slaves to the specious world's controul,
We sigh a long farewell to truth ;
That world corrupts the noblest soul.

8.

Ah, joyous season ! when the mind
Dares all things boldly but to lie ;
When thought ere spoke is unconfined,
And sparkles in the placid eye.

9.

Not so in Man's maturer years,
When Man himself is but a tool ;
When interest sways our hopes and fears,
And all must love and hate by rule.

10.

With fools in kindred vice the same,
We learn at length our faults to blend,
And those, and those alone may claim
The prostituted name of friend.

Such is the common lot of man :

Can we then 'scape from folly free?

Can we reverse the general plan,

Nor be what all in turn must be?

12.

No, for myself, so dark my fate

Through every turn of life hath been ;

Man and the world I so much hate,

I care not when I quit the scene.

13.

But thou, with spirit frail and light,

Wilt shine awhile and pass away ;

As glow-worms sparkle through the night,

But dare not stand the test of day.

14.

Alas ! whenever folly calls

Where parasites and princes meet,

(For cherished first in royal halls,

The welcome vices kindly greet)

15.

Ev'en now thou'rt nightly seen to add

One insect to the fluttering crowd ;

And still thy trifling heart is glad,
To join the vain, and court the proud.

16.

There dost thou glide from fair to fair,
Still simpering on with eager haste,
As flies along the gay parterre,
That taint the flowers they scarcely taste.

17.

But say, what nymph will prize the flame
Which seems, as marshy vapours move,
To flit along from dame to dame,
An ignis-fatuus gleam of love?

18.

What friend for thee, howe'er inclined,
Will deign to own a kindred care?
Who will debase his manly mind,
For friendship every fool may share?

19.

In time forbear; amidst the throng
No more so base a thing be seen;
No more so idly pass along:
Be something, any thing, but—mean.

XX.

*To ******

1.

WELL! thou art happy, and I feel
That I should thus be happy too;
For still my heart regards thy weal
Warmly, as it was wont to do.

2.

Thy husband's blest—and 'twill impart
Some pangs to view his happier lot:
But let them pass—Oh! how my heart
Would hate him, if he loved thee not!

3.

When late I saw thy favourite child,
I thought my jealous heart would break;
But when th' unconscious infant smiled,
I kissed it, for its mother's sake.

4.

I kissed it, and repressed my sighs
Its father in its face to see;
But then it had its mother's eyes,
And they were all to love and me.

5.

Mary, adieu! I must away :
While thou art blest I'll not repine ;
But near thee I can never stay ;
My heart would soon again be thine.

6.

I deemed that time, I deemed that pride
Had quenched at length my boyish flame ;
Nor knew, till seated by thy side,
My heart in all, save hope, the same.

7.

Yet was I calm: I knew the time
My breast would thrill before thy look ;
But now to tremble were a crime—
We met, and not a nerve was shook.

8.

I saw thee gaze upon my face,
Yet meet with no confusion there :
One only feeling could'st thou trace ;
The sullen calmness of despair.

9.

Away! away! my early dream
Remembrance never must awake :

Oh! where is Lethe's fabled stream?
My foolish heart be still, or break:

XXI.

From the Portuguese.

IN moments to delight devoted,
 « My life! » with tend'rest tone, you cry;
Dear words! on which my heart had doted,
 If youth could neither fade nor die.
To death even hours like these must roll,
 Ah! then repeat those accents never;
Or change « my life! » into « my soul! »
 Which, like my love, exists for ever.

XXII.

Impromptu, in reply to a Friend.

WHEN from the heart where Sorrow sits,
 Her dusky shadow mounts too high,
And o'er the changing aspect flits,
 And clouds the brow, or fills the eye;
Heed not that gloom, which soon shall sink:
 My thoughts their dungeon know too well;

Back to my breast the wanderers shrink,
And droop within their silent cell.

XXIII.

*Address, spoken at the opening of Drury-lane
Theatre, Saturday, October 10th, 1812.*

In one dread night our city saw, and sighed,
Bowed to the dust, the Drama's tower of pride;
In one short hour beheld the blazing fane,
Apollo sink, and Shakspeare cease to reign.

Ye who beheld, (oh! sight admired and mourned,
Whose radiance mocked the ruin it adorned!)
Through clouds of fire, the massy fragments riven,
Like Israel's pillar, chase the night from heaven;
Saw the long column of revolving flames
Shake its red shadow o'er the startled Thames,
While thousands, thronged around the burning
dome,
Shrank back appalled, and trembled for their home,
As glared the volumed blaze, and ghastly shone
The skies, with lightnings awful as their own,
Till blackening ashes and the lonely wall
Usurped the Muse's realm, and marked her fall;

Say—shall this new, nor less aspiring pile,
Reared where once rose the mightiest in our isle,
Know the same favour which the former knew,
A shrine for Shakspeare—worthy him and *you*?

Yes—it shall be—the magic of that name
Defies the scythe of time, the torch of flame;
On the same spot still consecrates the scene,
And bids the Drama *be* where she hath *been*:
This fabric's birth attests the potent spell—
Indulge our honest pride, and say, *How well!*

As soars this fane to emulate the last,
Oh! might we draw our omens from the past,
Some hour propitious to our prayers may boast
Names such as hallow still the dome we lost.
On Drury first your Siddons' thrilling art
O'erwhelmed the gentlest, stormed the sternest
heart.

On Drury, Garrick's latest laurels grew;
Here your last tears retiring Roscius drew,
Sighed his last thanks, and wept his last adieu:
But still for living wit the wreaths may bloom
That only waste their odours o'er the tomb.

Such Drury claimed and claims—nor you refuse
One tribute to revive his slumbering muse;
With garlands deck your own Menander's head!
Nor hoard your honours idly for the dead!

Dear are the days which made our annals bright,
Ere Garrick fled, or Brinsley ceased to write.
Heirs to their labours, like all high-born heirs,
Vain of *our* ancestry as they of *theirs*;
While thus Remembrance borrows Banquo's glass
To claim the sceptred shadows as they pass,
And we the mirror hold, where imaged shine
Immortal names, emblazoned on our line,
Pause—ere their feeblèr offspring you condemn,
Reflect how hard the task to rival them!

Friends of the stage! to whom both Players and
Plays

Must sue alike for pardon, or for praise,
Whose judging voice and eye alone direct
The boundless power to cherish or reject;
If e'er frivolity has led to fame,
And made us blush that you forbore to blame;
If e'er the sinking stage could condescend
To soothe the sickly taste, it dare not mend,

All past reproach may present scenes refute,
 And censure, wisely loud, be justly mute!
 Oh! since your fiat stamps the Drama's laws,
 Forbear to mock us with misplaced applause;
 So pride shall doubly nerve the actor's powers,
 And reason's voice be echoed back by ours!

This greeting o'er, the ancient rule obeyed,
 The Drama's homage by her herald paid,
 Receive *our* welcome too, whose every tone
 Springs from our hearts, and fain would win your
 own.

The curtain rises—may our stage unfold
 Scenes not unworthy Drury's days of old!
 Briton's our judges, Nature for our guide,
 Still may *we* please—long, long may *you* preside!

XXIV.

TO TIME.

TIME! on whose arbitrary wing
 The varying hours must flag or fly,
 Whose tardy winter, fleeting spring,
 But drag or drive us on to die—
 Hail thou! who on my birth bestowed

Those boons to all that know thee known ;
Yet better I sustain thy load,
For now I bear the weight alone.
I would not one fond heart should share
The bitter moments thou hast given ;
And pardon thee, since thou could'st spare
All that I loved, to peace or heav'n.
To them by joy or rest, on me
Thy future ills shall press in vain ;
I nothing owe but years to thee,
A debt already paid in pain.
Yet even that pain was some relief ;
It felt, but still forgot thy power :
The active agony of grief
Retards, but never counts the hour.
In joy I've sighed to think thy flight
Would soon subside from swift to slow ;
Thy cloud could overcast the light,
But could not add a night to woe ;
For then, however drear and dark,
My soul was suited to thy sky ;
One star alone shot forth a spark
To prove thee—not Eternity.

That beam hath sunk, and now thou art
A blank; a thing to count and curse
Through each dull tedious trifling part,
Which all regret, yet all rehearse.
One scene even thou canst not deform;
The limit of thy sloth or speed,
When future wanderers bear the storm
Which we shall sleep too sound to heed:
And I can smile to think how weak
Thine efforts shortly shall be shown,
When all the vengeance thou canst wreak
Must fall upon—a nameless stone!

XXV.

Translation of a Romaic Love Song.

1.

Ah! Love was never yet without
The pang, the agony, the doubt,
Which rends my heart with ceaseless sigh,
While day and night roll darkling by.

2.

Without one friend to hear my woe,
faint, I die beneath the blow.

That Love had arrows, well I knew ;
Alas! I find them poisoned too.

3.

Birds, yet in freedom, shun the net,
Which Love around your haunts hath set ;
Or circled by his fatal fire,
Your hearts shall burn, your hopes expire.

4.

A bird of free and careless wing
Was I, through many a smiling spring ;
But caught within the subtle snare,
I burn, and feebly flutter there.

5.

Who ne'er have loved, and loved in vain,
Can neither feel nor pity pain,
The cold repulse, the look askance,
The lightning of Love's angry glance.

6.

In flattering dreams I deemed thee mine ;
Now hope, and he who hoped, decline ;
Like melting wax, or withering flower,
I feel my passion, and thy power.

7.

My light of life! ah, tell me why
That pouting lip, and altered eye?
My bird of love! my beauteous mate!
And art thou changed, and canst thou hate?

8.

Mine eyes like wintry streams o'erflow :
What wretch with me would barter woe?
My bird! relent: one note could give
A charm, to bid thy lover live.

9.

My curdling blood, my madd'ning brain,
In silent anguish I sustain;
And still thy heart, without partaking
One pang, exults—while mine is breaking.

10.

Pour me the poison; fear not thou!
Thou canst not murder more than now:
I've lived to curse my natal day,
And Love, that thus can lingering slay.

11.

My wounded soul, my bleeding breast,
Can patience preach thee into rest?

Alas! too late, I dearly know,
That joy is harbinger of woe.

XXVI.

A SONG.

1.

THOU art not false, but thou art fickle,
To those thyself so fondly sought;
The tears that thou hast forced to trickle
Are doubly bitter from that thought:
'Tis this which breaks the heart thou grieve'st,
Too well thou lov'st—too soon thou leavest.

2.

The wholly false the heart despises,
And spurns deceiver and deceit;
But she who not a thought disguises,
Whose love is as sincere as sweet,—
When she can change who loved so truly,
It feels what mine has felt so newly.

3.

To dream of joy and wake to sorrow
Is doomed to all who love or live;

And if, when conscious on the morrow,
We scarce our fancy can forgive,
That cheated us in slumber only,
To leave the waking soul more lonely,

4.

What must they feel whom no false vision,
But truest, tenderest passion warmed?
Sincere, but swift in sad transition,
As if a dream alone had charmed?
Ah! sure such grief is fancy's scheming,
And all thy change can be but dreaming!

XXVII.

On being asked what was the « Origin of Love? »

THE « Origin of Love ! »—Ah why
That cruel question ask of me,
When thou may'st read in many an eye
He starts to life on seeing thee?
And should'st thou seek his *end* to know :
My heart forebodes, my fears foresee,
He'll linger long in silent woe ;
But live—until I cease to be.

XXVIII.

Remember him, etc.

1.

REMEMBER him, whom passion's power
Severely, deeply, vainly proved :
Remember thou that dangerous hour
When neither fell, though both were loved.

2.

That yielding breast, that melting eye,
Too much invited to be blest :
That gentle prayer, that pleading sigh,
The wilder wish reproved, repress.

3.

Oh ! let me feel that all I lost,
But saved thee all that conscience fears ;
And blush for every pang it cost
To spare the vain remorse of years.

4.

Yet think of this when many a tongue,
Whose busy accents whisper blame,
Would do the heart that loved thee wrong,
And brand a nearly blighted name.

5.

Think that, whate'er to others, thou
Hast seen each selfish thought subdued :
I bless thy purer soul even now,
Even now, in midnight solitude.

6.

Oh, God ! that we had met in time,
Our hearts as fond, thy hand more free ;
When thou had'st loved without a crime,
And I been less unworthy thee !

7.

Far may thy days, as heretofore,
From this our gaudy world be past !
And, that too bitter moment o'er,
Oh ! may such trial be thy last !

8.

This heart, alas ! perverted long,
Itself destroyed might there destroy ;
To meet thee in the glittering throng,
Would wake Presumption's hope of joy.

- 9.

Then to the things whose bliss or woe,
Like mine, is wild and worthless all,

That world resign—such scenes forego,
Where those who feel must surely fall.

10.

Thy youth, thy charms, thy tenderness,
Thy soul from long seclusion pure;
From what even here hath past, may guess
What there thy bosom must endure.

11.

Oh! pardon that imploring tear,
Since not by Virtue shed in vain,
My frenzy drew from eyes so dear;
For me they shall not weep again.

12.

Though long and mournful must it be,
The thought that we no more may meet;
Yet I deserve the stern decree,
And almost deem the sentence sweet.

13.

Still, had I loved thee less, my heart
Had then less sacrificed to thine;
It felt not half so much to part,
As if its guilt had made thee mine.

XXIX.

Lines inscribed upon a Cup formed from a Skull.

1.

START not—nor deem my spirit fled :
In me behold the only skull,
From which, unlike a living head,
Whatever flows is never dull.

2.

I lived, I loved, I quaffed, like thee ;
I died ; let earth my bones resign :
Fill up—thou canst not injure me ;
The worm hath fouler lips than thine.

3.

Better to hold the sparkling grape,
Than nurse the earth-worm's slimy brood ;
And circle in the goblet's shape
The drink of Gods, than reptile's food.

4.

Where once my wit, perchance, hath shone,
In aid of others' let me shine ;
And when, alas ! our brains are gone,
What nobler substitute than wine !

5.

Quaff while thou canst—another race,
When thou and thine like me are sped,
May rescue thee from earth's embrace,
And rhyme and revel with the dead.

6.

Why not? since through life's little day
Our heads such sad effects produce;
Redeemed from worms and wasting clay,
This chance is theirs, to be of use.

Newstead Abbey, 1808.

XXX.

To a Lady weeping.

WEEP, daughter of a royal line,
A Sire's disgrace, a realm's decay;
Ah, happy! if each tear of thine
Could wash a father's fault away!
Weep—for thy tears are Virtue's tears—
Auspicious to these suffering isles;

And be each drop in future years
Repaid thee by thy people's smiles!

March, 1812.

XXXI.

From the Turkish.

1.

THE chain I gave was fair to view,
The lute I added sweet in sound,
The heart that offered both was true,
And ill deserved the fate it found.

2.

These gifts were charmed by secret spell
Thy truth in absence to divine;
And they have done their duty well,
Alas! they could not teach thee thine.

3.

That chain was firm in every link,
But not to bear a stranger's touch;
That lute was sweet—till thou could'st think
In other hands its notes were such.

4.

Let him, who from thy neck unbound
The chain which shivered in his grasp,

Who saw that lute refuse to sound,
Restrung the chords, renew the clasp.

5.

When thou wert changed, they altered too;
The chain is broke, the music mute:
'Tis past—to them and thee adieu—
False heart, frail chain, and silent lute.

XXXII.

SONNET.

To Genevra.

THINE eyes blue tenderness, thy long fair hair,
And the wan lustre of thy features—caught
From contemplation—where serenely wrought,
Seems Sorrow's softness charmed from its despair—
Have thrown such speaking sadness in thine air,
That—but I know thy blessed bosom fraught
With mines of unalloyed and stainless thought—
I should have deemed thee doomed to earthly care.
With such an aspect, by his colours blent,
When from his beauty-breathing pencil born,
(Except that *thou* hast nothing to repent)
The Magdalen of Guido saw the morn—

•

Such seem'st thou—but how much more excellent!
With nought Remorse can claim—nor Virtue
scorn.

XXXIII.

SONNET.

To Geneva.

THY cheek is pale with thought, but not from woe,
And yet so lovely, that if Mirth could flush
Its rose of whiteness with the brightest blush,
My heart would wish away that ruder glow :—
And dazzle not thy deep-blue eyes—but oh!
While gazing on them sterner eyes will gush,
And into mine my mother's weakness rush,
Soft as the last drops round heaven's airy bow.
For, through thy long dark lashes low depending,
The soul of melancholy Gentleness
Gleams like a seraph from the sky descending,
Above all pain, yet pitying all distress;
At once such majesty with sweetness blending,
I worship more, but cannot love thee less.

XXXIV.

*Inscription on the Monument of a Newfoundland
Dog.*

WHEN some proud son of man returns to earth,
Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,
The sculptor's art exhausts the pomp of woe,
And storied urns record who rests below ;
When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,
Not what he was, but what he should have been :
But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,
The first to welcome, foremost to defend,
Whose honest heart is still his master's own,
Who labours, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,
Unhonoured falls, unnoticed all his worth,
Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth :
While man, vain insect ! hopes to be forgiven,
And claims himself a sole exclusive heaven.
Oh man ! thou feeble tenant of an hour,
Debased by slavery, or corrupt by power,
Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,
Degraded mass of animated dust !

Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,
 Thy smiles hypocrisy, thy words deceit !
 By nature vile, ennobled but by name,
 Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.
 Ye ! who perchance behold this simple urn,
 Pass on—it honours none you wish to mourn :
 To mark a friend's remains these stones arise,
 I never knew but one, and here he lies.

Newstead Abbey. Oct. 30, 1808.

XXXV.

FAREWELL.

FAREWELL ! if ever fondest prayer
 For other's weal availed on high,
 Mine will not all be lost in air,
 But waft thy name beyond the sky,
 'Twere vain to speak, to weep, to sigh :
 Oh ! more than tears of blood can tell,
 When wrung from guilt's expiring eye,
 Are in that word—Farewell !—Farewell !

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry ;
 But in my breast, and in my brain,
 Awake the pangs that pass not by,
 The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.

My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion there rebel;
I only know we loved in vain—
I only feel—Farewell! Farewell!

XXXVI.

On the Death of Sir Peter Parker, Bart.

THERE is a tear for all that die,
A mourner o'er the humblest grave;
But nations swell the funeral cry,
And Triumph weeps above the brave.

FOR them is Sorrow's purest sigh
O'er Ocean's heaving bosom sent:
In vain their bones unburied lie,
All earth becomes their monument!

A tomb is theirs on every page,
An epitaph on every tongue.
The present hours, the future age,
For them *Lewaf*, to them belong.

For them the voice of festal mirth
Grows hushed, *their name* the only sound;
While deep Remembrance pours to Worth
The goblet's tributary round.

A theme to crowds that knew them not,
Lamented by admiring foes,
Who would not share their glorious lot?
Who would not die the death they chose?

And, gallant Parker! thus enshrined
Thy life, thy fall, thy fame shall be;
And early valour, glowing, find
A model in thy memory.

But there are breasts that bleed with thee
In woe, that glory cannot quell;
And shuddering hear of victory,
Where one so dear, so dauntless, fell.

Where shall they turn to mourn thee less?
When cease to hear thy cherished name?
Time cannot teach forgetfulness,
While Grief's full heart is fed by Fame.

Alas! for them, though not for thee,
They cannot choose but weep the more;
Deep for the dead the grief must be,
Who ne'er gave cause to mourn before.

NOTES

TO

THE POEMS.

Note 1, page 22.

Written after swimming from Sestos to Abydos.

On the 3d of May, 1810, while the Salsette (Captain Bathurst) was lying in the Dardanelles, Lieutenant Ekenhead of that frigate and the writer of these rhymes swam from the European shore to the Asiatic—by the-by, from Abydos to Sestos would have been more correct. The whole distance from the place whence we started to our landing on the other side, including the length we were carried by the current, was computed by those on board the frigate at upwards of four English miles; though the actual breadth is barely one. The rapidity of the current is such that no boat can row directly across, and it may in some measure be estimated from the circumstance of the whole distance being accomplished by one of the parties in an hour and five, and by the other in an hour and ten minutes. The water was extremely cold from the melting of the mountain-snows. About three weeks before, in April, we had made an attempt, but having ridden all the way from the Troad the same morning, and the water being of an icy chillness, we found it necessary to postpone the completion till the frigate anchored below the castles, when we swam the straits, as just stated; entering a considerable way above the European, and landing below the Asiatic fort. Chevalier says that a young Jew swam the same distance for his mistress; and Oliver mentions it having been done by a Neapolitan; but our consul, Tarragona, remembered neither of

these circumstances, and tried to dissuade us from the attempt. A number of the Salsette's crew were known to have accomplished a greater distance; and the only thing that surprised me was, that, as doubts had been entertained of the truth of Leander's story, no traveller had ever endeavoured to ascertain its practicability.

Note 2, page 23.

Ζωή μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

Zoë mou, sas agapo, or *Ζωή μου, σὰς ἀγαπῶ*, a Romain expression of tenderness: if I translate it I shall affront the gentlemen, as it may seem that I supposed they could not; and if I do not I may affront the ladies. For fear of any misconstruction on the part of the latter I shall do so, begging pardon of the learned. It means, « My life, I love you! » which sounds very prettily in all languages, and is as much in fashion in Greece at this day as, Juvenal tells us, the two first words were amongst the Roman ladies, whose erotic expressions were all Hellenized.

Note 3, page 24, line 9.

By all the token-flowers that tell,

In the East (where ladies are not taught to write, lest they should scribble assignations) flowers, cinders, pebbles, etc. convey the sentiments of the parties by that universal deputy of Mercury—an old woman. A cinder says, « I burn for thee; » a bunch of flowers tied with hair, « Take me and fly; » but a pebble declares—what nothing else can.

Note 4, page 24, line 15.

Though I fly to Istambol.

Constantinople.

Note 5, page 26, line 3.

And the seven-hilled city seeking.

Constantinople. « *Ἐπὶ ἑπτάκοις.* »

HEBREW MELODIES.

The subsequent poems were written at the request of my friend, the Hon. D. Kinnaid, for a Selection of Hebrew Melodies, and have been published, with the music, arranged by Mr. BRAHAM and Mr. NATHAN.

HEBREW MELODIES.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.

I.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

II.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling place.

III.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,

The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent !

THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL SWEPT.

I.

THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL SWEPT,
The King of men, the loved of Heaven,
Which Music hallowed while she wept
O'er tones her heart of hearts had given,
Redoubled be her tears, its chords are riven !
It softened men of iron mould,
It gave them virtues not their own ;
No ear so dull, no soul so cold,
That felt not, fired not to the tone,
Till David's Lyre grew mightier than his throne !

II.

It told the triumphs of our King,
It wafted glory to our God ;
It made our gladdened vallies ring,
The cedars bow, the mountains nod ;

Its sound aspired to Heaven and there abode!
Since then, though heard on earth no more,
Devotion and her daughter Love
Still bid the bursting spirit soar
To sounds that seem as from above,
In dreams that day's broad light can not remove.

IF THAT HIGH WORLD.

I.

IF THAT HIGH WORLD, which lies beyond
Our own, surviving Love endears;
If there the cherished heart be fond,
The eye the same, except in tears—
How welcome those untrodden spheres!
How sweet this very hour to die!
To soar from earth and find all fears
Lost in thy light—Eternity!

II.

It must be so: 'tis not for self
That we so tremble on the brink;
And striving to o'erleap the gulph,
Yet cling to Being's severing link.
Oh! in that future let us think

To hold each heart the heart that shares,
With them the immortal waters drink,
And soul in soul grow deathless theirs!

THE WILD GAZELLE.

I.

THE WILD GAZELLE on Judah's hills
Exulting yet may bound,
And drink from all the living rills
That gush on holy ground;
Its airy step and glorious eye
May glance in tameless transport by:—

II.

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,
Hath Judah witnessed there;
And o'er her scenes of lost delight
Inhabitants more fair.
The cedars wave on Lebanon,
But Judah's statelier maids are gone!

III.

More blest each palm that shades those plains
Than Israel's scattered race;
For, taking root, it there remains

In solitary grace :
It cannot quit its place of birth,
It will not live in other earth.

IV.

But we must wander witheringly,
In other lands to die ;
And where our fathers' ashes be,
Our own may never lie :
Our temple hath not left a stone,
And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

OH ! WEEP FOR THOSE.

I.

OH ! WEEP FOR THOSE that wept by Babel's stream,
Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream ;
Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell ;
Mourn—where their God hath dwelt the Godless
dwell !

II.

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet ?
And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet ?
And Judah's melody once more rejoice
The hearts that leaped before its heavenly voice ?

III.

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest !
The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
Mankind their country—Israel but the grave !

ON JORDAN'S BANKS.

I.

ON JORDAN'S BANKS the Arabs' camels stray,
On Sion's hill the False One's votaries pray,
The Baal-adorer bows on Sinai's steep—
Yet there—even there—Oh God ! thy thunders sleep :

II.

There—where thy finger scorched the tablet stone !
There—where thy shadow to thy people shone !
Thy glory shrouded in its garb of fire :
Thyself—none living see and not expire !

III.

Oh ! in the lightning let thy glance appear !
Sweep from his shivered hand the oppressor's spear :
How long by tyrants shall thy land be trod !
How long thy temple worshipless, Oh God !

JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.

I.

SINCE our country, our God—Oh, my Sire!
Demand that thy Daughter expire;
Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow—
Strike the bosom that's bared for thee now!

II.

And the voice of my mourning is o'er,
And the mountains behold me no more:
If the hand that I love lay me low,
There cannot be pain in the blow!

III.

And of this, oh, my Father! be sure—
That the blood of thy child is as pure
As the blessing I beg ere it flow,
And the last thought that soothes me below.

IV.

Though the virgins of Salem lament,
Be the judge and the hero unbent!
I have won the great battle for thee,
And my Father and Country are free!

-V.

When this blood of thy giving hath gushed,
When the voice that thou lovest is hushed,
Let my memory still be thy pride,
And forget not I smiled as I died!

OH! SNATCHED AWAY IN BEAUTY'S
BLOOM.

I.

OH! SNATCHED AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

II.

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread:
Fond wretch! as if her step disturbed the dead!

III.

Away; we know that tears are vain,
That death nor heeds nor hears distress:

Will this unteach us to complain?

Or make one mourner weep the less?

And thou—who tell'st me to forget,

Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

MY SOUL IS DARK.

I.

MY SOUL IS DARK—Oh! quickly string

The harp I yet can brook to hear;

And let thy gentle fingers fling

Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.

If in this heart a hope be dear,

That sound shall charm it forth again;

If in these eyes there lurk a tear,

'Twill flow, and cease to burn my brain:

II.

But bid the strain be wild and deep,

Nor let thy notes of joy be first:

I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,

Or else this heavy heart will burst;

For it hath been by sorrow nurst,

And ached in sleepless silence long;

And now 'tis doomed to know the worst,

And break at once—or yield to song.

I SAW THEE WEEP.

I.

I SAW THEE WEEP—the big bright tear
Came o'er that eye of blue ;
And then methought it did appear
A violet dropping dew :
I saw thee smile—the sapphire's blaze
Beside thee ceased to shine ;
It could not match the living rays
That filled that glance of thine.

II.

As clouds from yonder sun receive
A deep and mellow die,
Which scarce the shade of coming eve
Can banish from the sky,
Those smiles unto the moodiest mind
Their own pure joy impart ;
Their sunshine leaves a glow behind
That lightens o'er the heart.

THY DAYS ARE DONE.

I.

THY DAYS ARE DONE, thy fame begun ;
 Thy country's strains record
 The triumphs of her chosen Son,
 The slaughters of his sword !
 The deeds he did, the fields he won,
 The freedom he restored !

II.

Though thou art fall'n, while we are free
 Thou shalt not taste of death !
 The generous blood that flowed from thee
 Disdained to sink beneath :
 Within our veins its currents be,
 Thy spirit on our breath !

III.

Thy name, our charging hosts along,
 Shall be the battle-word !
 Thy fall, the theme of choral song
 From virgin voices poured !
 To weep would do thy glory wrong ;
 Thou shalt not be deplored.

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE.

I.

WARRIORS and Chiefs ! should the shaft or the sword
Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,
Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path :
Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath !

II.

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,
Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet !
Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

III.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
Heir to my royalty, son of my heart !
Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day !

SAUL.

I.

THOU whose spell can raise the dead,
Bid the prophet's form appear.

« Samuel, raise thy buried head !

« King, behold the phantom seer ! »

Earth yawned ; he stood the centre of a cloud :

Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.

Death stood all glassy in his fixed eye ;

His hand was withered, and his veins were dry ;

His foot, in bony whiteness, glittered there,

Shrunken and sinewless, and ghastly bare :

From lips that moved not and unbreathing frame,

Like caverned winds, the hollow accents came.

Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,

At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke.

II.

« Why is my sleep disquieted ?

« Who is he that calls the dead ?

« Is it thou, Oh King ? Behold

« Bloodless are these limbs, and cold :

« Such are mine ; and such shall be

« Thine, to-morrow, when with me :

« Ere the coming day is done,

« Such shalt thou be, such thy son.

« Fare thee well, but for a day ;

« Then we mix our mouldering clay.

« Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,
« Pierced by shafts of many a bow;
« And the falchion by thy side
« To thy heart, thy hand shall guide :
« Crownless, breathless, headless fall,
« Son and sire, the house of Saul ! »

« ALL IS VANITY, SAITH THE
PREACHER. »

I.

FAME, wisdom, love, and power were mine,
And health and youth possessed me ;
My goblets blushed from every vine,
And lovely forms caressed me ;
I sunned my heart in beauty's eyes,
And felt my soul grow tender ;
All earth can give, or mortal prize,
Was mine of regal splendour.

II.

I strive to number o'er what days
Remembrance can discover,
Which all that life or earth displays
Would lure me to live over.

There rose no day, there rolled no hour
Of pleasure unembittered;
And not a trapping decked my power
That galled not while it glittered.

III.

The serpent of the field, by art
And spells, is won from harming;
But that which coils around the heart,
Oh! who hath power of charming?

It will not list to wisdom's lore,
Nor music's voice can lure it;
But there it stings for evermore
The soul that must endure it.

WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS
SUFFERING CLAY.

I.

WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY,
Ah, whither strays the immortal mind?
It cannot die, it cannot stay,
But leaves its darkened dust behind.
Then, unembodied, doth it trace
By steps each planet's heavenly way?

An age shall fleet like earthly year;
 Its years as moments shall endure.
 Away, away, without a wing,
 O'er all, through all, its thought shall fly;
 A nameless and eternal thing,
 Forgetting what it was to die.

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR.

I.

THE King was on his throne,
 The Satraps thronged the hall;
 A thousand bright lamps shone
 O'er that high festival.
 A thousand cups of gold,
 In Judah deemed divine—
 Jehovah's vessels hold
 The godless Heathen's wine!

II.

In that same hour and hall,
 The fingers of a hand
 Came forth against the wall,
 And wrote as if on sand:

The fingers of a man;—
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

III.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless waxed his look,
And tremulous his voice.
« Let the men of lore appear,
« The wisest of the earth,
« And expound the words of fear,
« Which mar our royal mirth. »

IV.

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill;
And the unknown letters stood
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore;
But now they were not sage,
They saw—but knew no more.

V.

A captive in the land,
 A stranger and a youth,
 He heard the king's command,
 He saw that writing's truth.
 The lamps around were bright,
 The prophecy in view;
 He read it on that night,—
 The morrow proved it true.

VI.

" Belshazzar's grave is made,
 " His kingdom passed away,
 " He in the balance weighed,
 " Is light and worthless clay.
 " The shroud, his robe of state,
 " His canopy, the stone;
 " The Mede is at his gate!
 " The Persian on his throne!"

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS!

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS! melancholy star!
 Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,

That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,
How like art thou to joy remembered well!
So gleams the past, the light of other days,
Which shines, but warms not with its powerless
 rays;
A night-beam Sorrow watcheth to behold,
Distinct, but distant—clear—but, oh how cold!

WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS THOU
DEEM'ST IT TO BE.

I.

WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS THOU DEEM'ST IT TO BE,
I need not have wandered from far Galilee;
It was but abjuring my creed to efface
The curse which, thou say'st, is the crime of my
 race.

II.

If the bad never triumph, then God is with thee!
If the slave only sin, thou art spotless and free!
If the Exile on earth is an Outcast on high,
Live on in thy faith, but in mine I will die.

III.

I have lost for that faith more than thou canst bestow,
As the God who permits thee to prosper doth know;

In his hand is my heart and my hope—and in thine
The land and the life which for him I resign.

HEROD'S LAMENT FOR MARIAMNE.

I.

Oh, Mariamne ! now for thee
The heart for which thou bled'st is bleeding ;
Revenge is lost in agony,
And wild remorse to rage succeeding.
Oh, Mariamne ! where art thou ?
Thou canst not hear my bitter pleading :
Ah, could'st thou—thou would'st pardon now,
Though heaven were to my prayer unheeding.

II.

And is she dead?—and did they dare
Obey my phrensy's jealous raving?
My wrath but doomed my own despair :
• The sword that smote her's o'er me waving.—
But thou art cold, my murdered love !
And this dark heart is vainly craving
For her who soars alone above,
And leaves my soul unworthy saving.

III.

She's gone, who shared my diadem ;
She sunk, with her my joys entombing ;
I swept that flower from Judah's stem
Whose leaves for me alone were blooming.
And mine's the guilt, and mine the hell,
This bosom's desolation dooming ;
And I have earned those tortures well,
Which unconsumed are still consuming !

ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUCTION
OF JERUSALEM BY TITUS.

I.

FROM the last hill that looks on thy once holy dome
I beheld thee, Oh SION ! when rendered to Rome :
'Twas thy last sun went down, and the flames of
thy fall
Flashed back on the last glance I gave to thy wall.

II.

I looked for thy temple, I looked for my home,
And forgot for a moment my bondage to come ;

I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy fane,
And the fast-fettered hands that made vengeance
in vain..

III.

On many an eve, the high spot whence I gazed
Had reflected the last beam of day as it blazed ;
While I stood on the height, and beheld the decline
Of the rays from the mountain that shone on thy
shrine.

IV.

And now on that mountain I stood on that day,
But I marked not the twilight beam melting away ;
Oh! would that the lightning had glared in its stead,
And the thunderbolt burst on the conqueror's head!

V.

But the Gods of the Pagan shall never profane
The shrine where Jehovah disdained not to reign ;
And scattered and scorned as thy people may be,
Our worship, oh Father ! is only for thee.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT
DOWN AND WEPT.

I.

WE sate down and wept by the waters
Of Babel, and thought of the day
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
Made Salem's high places his prey;
And ye, oh her desolate daughters!
Were scattered all weeping away.

II.

While sadly we gazed on the river
Which rolled on in freedom below,
They demanded the song; but, oh never
That triumph the stranger shall know!
May this right hand be withered for ever,
Ere it string our high harp for the foe!

III.

On the willow that harp is suspended,
Oh Salem! its sound should be free;
And the hour when thy glories were ended
But left me that token of thee:
And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me!

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.

I.

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

II.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen :
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath
 blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

III.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed ;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew
 still !

IV.

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his
 pride :
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

V.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

VI.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

FROM JOB.

I.

A SPIRIT passed before me : I beheld
The face of Immortality unveiled—
Deep sleep came down on ev'ry eye save mine—
And there it stood,—all formless—but divine :
Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake ;
And as my damp hair stiffened, thus it spake :

II.

« Is man more just than God ? Is man more pure
« Than he who deems even Seraphs insecure ?
« Creatures of clay—vain dwellers in the dust !
« The moth survives you, and are ye more just ?
« Things of a day ! you wither ere the night,
« Heedless and blind to Wisdom's wasted light ! »

THE SIEGE OF CORINTH.



TO
JOHN HOBHOUSE, Esq.

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS

FRIEND.

Jan. 22, 1816

ADVERTISEMENT.

« **T**HE grand army of the Turks (in 1715), under
« the Prime Vizier, to open to themselves a way
« into the heart of the Morea, and to form the siege
« of Napoli di Romania, the most considerable
« place in all that country*, thought it best in the
« first place to attack Corinth, upon which they
« made several storms. The garrison being weak-
« ened, and the governor seeing it was impossible
« to hold out against so mighty a force, thought

* Napoli di Romania is not now the most considerable place in the Morea, but Tripolitza, where the Pacha resides, and maintains his government. Napol is near Argos. I visited all three in 1810-11; and in the course of journeying through the country from my first arrival in 1809, I crossed the Isthmus eight times in my way from Attica to the Morea, over the mountains; or in the other direction, when passing from the Gulf of Athens to that of Lepanto. Both the routes are picturesque and beautiful, though very different: that by sea has more sameness, but the voyage being always within sight of land, and often very near it, presents many attractive views of the islands Salamis, AEGina, Poro, etc. and the coast of the continent.

ADVERTISEMENT.

« fit to beat a parley : but while they were treat-
« ing about the articles, one of the magazines in
« the Turkish camp, wherein they had six hun-
« dred barrels of powder, blew up by accident,
« whereby six or seven hundred men were killed :
« which so enraged the infidels, that they would
« not grant any capitulation, but stormed the
« place with so much fury, that they took it,
« and put most of the garrison, with Signior Mi-
« notti, the governor, to the sword. The rest,
« with Antonio Bembo, proveditor extraordinary, .
« were made prisoners of war. »—*History of the
Turks*, vol. iii, p. 151.

THE
SIEGE OF CORINTH.

I.

MANY a vanished year and age,
And tempest's breath, and battle's rage,
Have swept o'er Corinth ; yet she stands
A fortress formed to Freedom's hands.
The whirlwind's wrath, the earthquake's shock, 5
Have left untouched her hoary rock,
The keystone of a land, which still,
Though fall'n, looks proudly on that hill,
The land-mark to the double tide
That purpling rolls on either side, 10
As if their waters chafed to meet,
Yet pause and crouch beneath her feet.
But could the blood before her shed
Since first Timoleon's brother bled,
Or baffled Persia's despot fled, 15
Arise from out the earth which drank
The stream of slaughter as it sank,

That sanguine ocean would o'erflow
Her isthmus idly spread below :
Or could the bones of all the slain, 20
Who perished there, be piled again,
That rival pyramid would rise
More mountain-like, through those clear skies,
Than yon tower-capt Acropolis
Which seems the very clouds to kiss. 25

II.

On dun Cithæron's ridge appears
The gleam of twice ten thousand spears ;
And downward to the Isthmian plain
From shore to shore of either main,
The tent is pitched, the crescent shines 30
Along the Moslem's leaguering lines ;
And the dusk Spahi's bands advance
Beneath each bearded pasha's glance ;
And far and wide as eye can reach
The turbaned cohorts throng the beach ; 35
And there the Arab's camel kneels,
And there his steed the Tartar wheels ;
The Turcoman hath left his herd',
The sabre round his loins to gird ;

And there the volleying thunders pour, 40
Till waves grow smoother to the roar.
The trench is dug, the cannon's breath
Wings the far hissing globe of death ;
Fast whirl the fragments from the wall,
Which crumbles with the ponderous ball ; 45
And from that wall the foe replies,
O'er dusty plain and smoky skies,
With fires that answer fast and well
The summons of the Infidel.

III.

But near and nearest to the wall 50
Of those who wish and work its fall,
With deeper skill in war's black art
Than Othman's sons, and high of heart
As any chief that ever stood
Triumphant in the fields of blood ; 55
From post to post, and deed to deed,
Fast spurring on his reeking steed,
Where sallying ranks the trench assail,
And make the foremost Moslem quail ;
Or where the battery, guarded well, 60
Remains as yet impregnable,

Alighting cheerly to inspire
The soldier slackening in his fire;
The first and freshest of the host
Which Stamboul's sultan there can boast, 65
To guide the follower o'er the field,
To point the tube, the lance to wield,
Or whirl around the bickering blade;—
Was Alp, the Adrian renegade!

IV.

From Venice—once a race of worth 70
His gentle sires—he drew his birth;
But late an exile from her shore,
Against his countrymen he bore
The arms they taught to bear; and now
The turban girt his shaven brow. 75
Through many a change had Corinth passed
With Greece to Venice' rule at last;
And here, before her walls, with those
To Greece and Venice equal foes,
He stood a foe, with all the zeal 80
Which young and fiery converts feel,
Within whose heated bosom throngs
The memory of a thousand wrongs.

To him had Venice ceased to be
Her ancient civic boast—"the Free;" 85
And in the palace of St. Mark
Unnamed accusers in the dark
Within the "Lion's mouth" had placed
A charge against him uneffaced:
He fled in time, and saved his life, 90
To waste his future years in strife,
That taught his land how great her loss
In him who triumphed o'er the Cross,
'Gainst which he reared the Crescent high,
And battled to avenge or die. 95

V.

Coumourgi^a—he whose closing scene
Adorned the triumph of Eugene,
When on Carlowitz' bloody plain,
The last and mightiest of the slain,
He sank, regretting not to die, 100
But curst the Christian's victory—
Coumourgi—can his glory cease,
That latest conqueror of Greece,
Till Christian hands to Greece restore
The freedom Venice gave of yore? 105

A hundred years have rolled away
Since he refixed the Moslem's sway;
And now he led the Mussulman,
And gave the guidance of the van
To Alp, who well repaid the trust 110
By cities levelled with the dust;
And proved, by many a deed of death,
How firm his heart in novel faith.

VI.

The walls grew weak; and fast and hot
Against them poured the ceaseless shot, 115
With unabating fury sent
From battery to battlement;
And thunder-like the pealing din
Rose from each heated culverin;
And here and there some crackling dome 120
Was fired before the exploding bomb:
And as the fabric sank beneath
The shattering shell's volcanic breath,
In red and wreathing columns flashed
The flame, as loud the ruin crashed, 125
Or into countless meteors driven,
Its earth-stars melted into heaven;

Whose clouds that day grew doubly dun,
Impervious to the hidden sun,
With volumed smoke that slowly grew 130
To one wide sky of sulphurous hue.

VII.

But not for vengeance, long delayed,
Alone, did Alp, the renegade,
The Moslem warriors sternly teach
His skill to pierce the promised breach : 135
Within these walls a maid was pent
His hope would win, without consent
Of that inexorable sire,
Whose heart refused him in its ire,
When Alp, beneath his Christian name, 140
Her virgin hand aspired to claim.
In happier mood, and earlier time,
While unimpeached for traitorous crime,
Gayest in gondola or hall,
He glittered through the Carnival; 145
And tuned the softest serenade
That e'er on Adria's waters played
At midnight to Italian maid.

VIII.

And many deemed her heart was won ;
For sought by numbers, given to none, 150
Had young Francesca's hand remained
Still by the church's bonds unchained :
And when the Adriatic bore
Lanciotto to the Paynim shore,
Her wonted smiles were seen to fail, 155
And pensive waxed the maid and pale ;
More constant at confessional,
More rare at masque and festival ;
Or seen at such, with downcast eyes,
Which conquered hearts they ceased to prize : 160
With listless look she seems to gaze ;
With humbler care her form arrays ;
Her voice less lively in the song ;
Her step, though light, less fleet among
The pairs, on whom the Morning's glance 165
Breaks, yet unsated with the dance.

IX.

Sent by the state to guard the land,
(Which, wrested from the Moslem's hand,
While Sobieski tamed his pride
By Buda's wall and Danube's side, 170

The chiefs of Venice wrung away
 From Patra to Eubœa's bay,)
 Minotti held in Corinth's towers
 The Doge's delegated powers,
 While yet the pitying eye of Peace 175
 Smiled o'er her long forgotten Greece :
 And ere that faithless truce was broke
 Which freed her from the unchristian yoke,
 With him his gentle daughter came ;
 Nor there, since Menelaus', dame 180
 Forsook her lord and land, to prove
 What woes await 'on lawless love,
 Had fairer form adorned the shore
 Than she, the matchless stranger, bore.

X.

The wall is rent, the ruins yawn ; 185
 And, with to-morrow's earliest dawn,
 O'er the disjointed mass shall vault
 The foremost of the fierce assault.
 The bands are ranked ; the chosen van
 Of Tartar, and of Mussulman, 190
 The full of hope, misnamed " forlorn,"
 Who hold the thought of death in scorn,

And win their way with falchions' force,
Or pave the path with many a corse,
O'er which the following brave may rise, 195
Their stepping-stone—the last who dies!

XI.

'Tis midnight: on the mountain's brown
The cold, round moon shines deeply down;
Blue roll the waters, blue the sky
Spreads like an ocean hung on high, 200
Bespangled with those isles of light,
So wildly, spiritually bright;
Who ever gazed upon them shining,
And turned to earth without repining,
Nor wished for wings to flee away, 205
And mix with their eternal ray?
The waves on either shore lay there
Calm, clear, and azure as the air;
And scarce their foam the pebbles shook,
But murmured meekly as the brook. 210
The winds were pillowed on the waves;
The banners drooped along their staves,
And, as they fell around them furling,
Above them shone the crescent curling;

And that deep silence was unbroke, 215

Save where the watch his signal spoke,

Save where the steed neighed oft and shrill,

And echo answered from the hill,

And the wide hum of that wild host

Rustled like leaves from coast to coast, 220

As rose the Muezzin's voice in air

In midnight call to wonted prayer;

It rose, that chanted mournful strain,

Like some lone spirit's o'er the plain :

'Twas musical, but sadly sweet, 225

Such as when winds and harp-strings meet,

And take a long unmeasured tone,

To mortal minstrelsy unknown.

It seemed to those within the wall

A cry prophetic of their fall : 230

It struck even the besieger's ear

With something ominous and drear,

An undefined and sudden thrill,

Which makes the heart a moment still,

Then beat with quicker pulse, ashamed 235

Of that strange sense its silence framed;

Such as a sudden passing-bell

Wakes, though but for a stranger's knell.

XII.

The tent of Alp was on the shore ;
The sound was hushed, the prayer was o'er ; 240
The watch was set, the night-round made,
All mandates issued and obeyed :
'Tis but another anxious night,
His pains the morrow may requite
With all revenge and love can pay, 245
In guerdon for their long delay.
Few hours remain, and he hath need
Of rest, to nerve for many a deed
Of slaughter ; but within his soul
The thoughts like troubled waters roll. 250
He stood alone among the host ;
Not his the loud fanatic boast
To plant the crescent o'er the cross,
Or risk a life with little loss,
Secure in paradise to be 255
By Houris loved immortally :
Nor his, what burning patriots feel,
The stern exaltedness of zeal,
Profuse of blood, untired in toil,
When battling on the parent soil. 260

He stood alone—a renegade
Against the country he betrayed;
He stood alone amidst his band,
Without a trusted heart or hand :
They followed him, for he was brave, 265
And great the spoil he got and gave;
They crouched to him, for he had skill
To warp and wield the vulgar will :
But still his Christian origin
With them was little less than sin. 270
They envied even the faithless fame
He earned beneath a Moslem name;
Since he, their mightiest chief, had been
In youth a bitter Nazarene.
They did not know how pride can stoop, 275
When baffled feelings withering droop;
They did not know how hate can burn
In hearts once changed from soft to stern;
Nor all the false and fatal zeal
The convert of revenge can feel. 280
He ruled them—man may rule the worst,
By ever daring to be first :
So lions o'er the jackal sway;
The jackal points, he fells the prey,

Then on the vulgar yelling press, 285
To gorge the relics of success.

XIII.

His head grows feyered, and his pulse
The quick successive throbs convulse;
In vain from side to side he throws
His form, in courtship of repose; 295
Or if he dozed, a sound, a start
Awoke him with a sunken heart.
The turban on his hot brow pressed,
The mail weighed lead-like on his breast,
Though oft and long beneath its weight 295
Upon his eyes had slumber sate,
Without or couch or canopy,
Except a rougher field or sky
Than now might yield a warrior's bed,
Than now along the heaven was spread. 300
He could not rest, he could not stay
Within his tent to wait for day,
But walked him forth along the sand,
Where thousand sleepers strewed the strand.
What pillowed them? and why should he 305
More wakeful than the humblest be?

Since more their peril, worse their toil,
And yet they fearless dream of spoil;
While he alone, where thousands passed
A night of sleep, perchance their last, 310
In sickly vigil wandered on,
And envied all he gazed upon.

XIV.

He felt his soul become more light
Beneath the freshness of the night.
Cool was the silent sky, though calm, 315
And bathed his brow with airy balm:
Behind, the camp—before him lay,
In many a winding creek and bay,
Lepanto's gulf: and, on the brow
Of Delphi's hill, unshaken snow, 320
High and eternal, such as shone
Through thousand summers brightly gone
Along the gulf, the mount, the clime;
It will not melt, like man, to time:
Tyrant and slave are swept away, 325
Less formed to wear before the ray,
But that white veil, the lightest, frailest,
Which on the mighty mount thou hailest,

While tower and tree are torn and rent,
Shines o'er its craggy battlement; 330
In form a peak, in height a cloud,
In texture like a hovering shroud,
'Thus high by parting Freedom spread,
As from her fond abode she fled,
And lingered on the spot, where long 335
Her prophet spirit spake in song.
Oh, still her step at moments falters
O'er withered fields, and ruined altars,
And fain would wake, in souls too broken,
By pointing to each glorious token. 340
But vain her voice, till better days
Dawn in those yet remembered rays
Which shone upon the Persian flying,
And saw the Spartan smile in dying.

XV.

Not mindless of these mighty times 345
Was Alp, despite his flight and crimes;
And through this night, as on he wandered,
And o'er the past and present pondered,
And thought upon the glorious dead
Who there in better cause had bled, 350

He felt how faint and feebly dim
The fame that could accrue to him,
Who cheered the band, and waved the sword,
A traitor in a turbaned horde ;
And led them to the lawless siege, 355
Whose best success were sacrilege.
Not so had those his fancy numbered,
The chiefs whose dust around him slumbered ;
Their phalanx marshalled on the plain,
Whose bulwarks were not then in vain. 360
They fell devoted, but undying ;
The very gale their names seemed sighing :
The waters murmured of their name ;
The woods were peopled with their fame ;
The silent pillar, lone and gray, 365
Claimed kindred with their sacred clay ;
Their spirits wrapt the dusky mountain,
Their memory sparkled o'er the fountain ;
The meanest rill, the mightiest river
Rolled mingling with their fame for ever. 370
Despite of every yoke she bears,
That land is glory's still and theirs !
'Tis still a watch-word to the earth :
When man would do a deed of worth

He points to Greece, and turns to tread, 375
So sanctioned, on the tyrant's head:
He looks to her, and rushes on
Where life is lost, or freedom won.

XVI.

Still by the shore Alp mutely mused,
And wooed the freshness Night diffused. 380
There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea,
Which changeless rolls eternally;
So that wildest of waves, in their angriest mood,
Scarce break on the bounds of the land for a rood;
And the powerless moon beholds them flow, 385
Heedless if she come or go:
Calm or high, in main or bay,
On their course she hath no sway.
The rock unworn its base doth bare, 389
And looks o'er the surf, but it comes not there;
And the fringe of the foam may be seen below,
On the line that it left long ages ago:
A smooth short space of yellow sand
Between it and the greener land.
He wandered on, along the beach, 395
Till within the range of a carbine's reach

Of the leaguered wall ; but they saw him not,
Or how could he 'scape from the hostile shot?
Did traitors lurk in the Christians' hold?
Were their hands grown stiff, or their hearts waxed
cold? 400

I know not, in sooth ; but from yonder wall
There flashed no fire, and there hissed no ball,
Though he stood beneath the bastion's frown,
That flanked the sea-ward gate of the town ;
Though he heard the sound, and could almost tell
The sullen words of the sentinel, 406

As his measured step on the stone below
Clanked, as he paced it to and fro ;
And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall
Hold o'er the dead their carnival, 410
Gorging and growling o'er carcase and limb ;
They were too busy to bark at him !

From a Tartar's skull they had stripped the flesh,
As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh ; 414
And their white tusks crunched o'er the whiter skull,⁴
As it slipped through their jaws, when their edge
grew dull,

As they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead,
When they scarce could rise from the spot where
they fed ;

So well had they broken a lingering fast 419
With those who had fallen for that night's repast.
And Alp knew, by the turbans that rolled on the
sand,

The foremost of these were the best of his band:
Crimson and green were the shawls of their wear,
And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair⁵,
All the rest was shaven and bare. 425
The scalps were in the wild dogs maw,
The hair was tangled round his jaw.
But close by the shore on the edge of the gulf,
There sat a vulture flapping a wolf,
Who had stolen from the hills, but kept away, 430
Scared by the dogs, from the human prey;
But he seized on his share of a steed that lay,
Picked by the birds, on the sands of the bay.

XVII.

Alp turned him from the sickening sight:
Never had shaken his nerves in fight; 435
But he better could brook to behold the dying,
Deep in the tide of their warm blood lying,
Scorched with the death-thirst, and writhing in vain,
Than the perishing dead who are past all pain.
There is something of pride in the perilous hour, 440

Whate'er be the shape in which death may lower ;
For Fame is there to say who bleeds,
And Honour's eye on daring deeds!
But when all is past, it is humbling to tread
O'er the weltering field of the tombless dead, 445
And see worms of the earth, and fowls of the air,
Beasts of the forest, all gathering there ;
All regarding man as their prey,
All rejoicing in his decay.

XVIII.

There is a temple in ruin stands, 450
Fashioned by long forgotten hands ;
Two or three columns, and many a stone,
Marble and granite, with grass o'ergrown !
Out upon Time ! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things before ! 455
Out upon Time ! who for ever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to grieve
O'er that which hath been, and o'er that which
must be :

What we have seen, our sons shall see ;
Remnants of things that have passed away, 460
Fragments of stone, reared by creatures of clay !

XIX.

He sate him down at a pillar's base,
And passed his hand athwart his face;
Like one in dreary musing mood,
Declining was his attitude; 465
His head was drooping on his breast,
Fevered, throbbing, and opprest;
And o'er his brow, so downward bent,
Oft his beating fingers went,
Hurriedly, as you may see 470
Your own run over the ivory key,
Ere the measured tone is taken
By the chords you would awaken.
There he sate all heavily,
As he heard the night-wind sigh. 475
Was it the wind, through some hollow stone^b,
Sent that soft and tender moan?
He lifted his head, and he looked on the sea,
But it was unrippled as glass may be;
He looked on the long grass—it waved not a blade;
How was that gentle sound conveyed? 481
He looked to the banners—each flag lay still,
So did the leaves on Cithæron's hill,

And he felt not a breath come over his cheek;
What did that sudden sound bespeak? 485
He turned to the left—is he sure of sight?
There sate a lady, youthful and bright!

XX.

He started up with more of fear
Than if an armed foe were near.
“ God of my fathers! what is here? 490
“ Who art thou, and wherefore sent
“ So near a hostile armament? ”
His trembling hands refused to sign
The cross he deemed no more divine:
He had resumed it in that hour, 495
But conscience wrung away the power.
He gazed, he saw: he knew the face
Of beauty, and the form of grace;
It was Francesca by his side,
The maid who might have been his bride! 500

The rose was yet upon her cheek,
But mellowed with a tenderer streak:
Where was the play of her soft lips fled?
Gone was the smile that enlivened their red.

The ocean's calm within their view, 505
Beside her eye had less of blue;
But like that cold wave it stood still,
And its glance, though clear, was chill.
Around her form a thin robe twining,
Nought concealed her bosom shining; 510
Through the parting of her hair,
Floating darkly downward there,
Her rounded arm showed white and bare :
And ere yet she made reply,
Once she raised her hand on high; 515
It was so wan, and transparent of hue,
You might have seen the moon shine through,

XXI.

" I come from my rest to him I love best,
" That I may be happy, and he may be blest.
" I have passed the guards, the gate, the wall; 520
" Sought thee in safety through foes and all.
" 'Tis said the lion will turn and flee
" From a maid in the pride of her purity;
" And the power on high, that can shield the good
" Thus from the tyrant of the wood, 525

« Hath extended its mercy to guard me as well
« From the hands of the leaguering infidel.
« I come—and if I come in vain,
« Never, oh never, we meet again!
« Thou hast done a fearful deed 530
« In falling away from thy father's creed :
« But dash that turban to earth, and sign
« The sign of the cross, and for ever be mine;
« Wring the black drop from thy heart,
« And to-morrow unites us no more to part.» 535

« And where should our bridal couch be spread?
« In the midst of the dying and the dead?
« For to-morrow we give to the slaughter and flame
« The sons and the shrines of the Christian name.
« None, save thou and thine, I've sworn, 540
« Shall be left upon the morn :
« But thee will I bear to a lovely spot,
« Where our hands shall be joined, and our sorrow
 forgot.
« There thou yet shalt be my bride,
« When once again I've quelled the pride 545
« Of Venice; and her hated race
« Have felt the arm they would debase

“ Scourge, with a whip of scorpions, those
“ Whom vice and envy made my foes.”

Upon his hand she laid her own— 550

Light was the touch, but it thrilled to the bone,
And shot a chillness to his heart,

Which fixed him beyond the power to start.

Though slight was that grasp so mortal cold,

He could not loose him from its hold; 555

But never did clasp of one so dear

Strike on the pulse with such feeling of fear,

As those thin fingers, long and white,

Froze through his blood by their touch that night.

The feverish glow of his brow was gone, 560

And his heart sank so still that it felt like stone,

As he looked on the face, and beheld its hue

So deeply changed from what he knew :

Fair but faint—without the ray

Of mind, that made each feature play : 565

Like sparkling waves on a sunny day;

• And her motionless lips lay still as death,

And her words came forth without her breath,

And there rose not a heave o'er her bosom's swell,

And there seemed not a pulse in her veins to dwell. 570

Though her eye shone out, yet the lids were fixed,
And the glance that it gave was wild and unmixed
With aught of change, as the eyes may seem
Of the restless who walk in a troubled dream;
Like the figures on arras, that gloomily glare, 575
Stirred by the breath of the wintry air,
So seen by the dying lamp's fitful light,
Lifeless, but life-like, and awful to sight;
As they seem, through the dimness, about to come
down 570

From the shadowy wall where their images frown;
Fearfully sitting to and fro,
As the gusts on the tapestry come and go.

" If not for love of me be given
 " Thus much, then, for the love of heaven,—
 " Again I say—that turban tear 585
 " From off thy faithless brow, and swear
 " Thine injured country's sons to spare,
 " Or thou art lost; and never shalt see
 " Not earth—that's past—but heaven or me.
 " If this thou dost accord, albeit. 590
 " A heavy doom 'tis thine to meet,
 " That doom shall half absolve thy sin,

- « And mercy's gate may receive thee within :
 « But pause one moment more, and take
 « The curse of him thou didst forsake; 595
 « And look once more to heaven, and see
 « Its love for ever shut from thee.
 « There is a light cloud by the moon— ?
 « 'Tis passing, and will pass full soon—
 « If, by the time its vapoury sail 600
 « Hath ceased her shaded orb to veil,
 « Thy heart within thee is not changed,
 « Then God and man are both avenged;
 « Dark will thy doom be, darker still
 « Thine immortality of ill. » 605

Alp looked to heaven, and saw on high
 The sign she spake of in the sky;
 But his heart was swollen, and turned aside,
 By deep interminable pride.
 This first false passion of his breast 610
 Rolled like a torrent o'er the rest.
He sue for mercy ! *He* dismayed
 By wild words of a timid maid !
He, wronged by Venice, vow to save
 Her sons, devoted to the grave ! 615

No—though that cloud were thunder's worst,
And charged to crush him—let it burst!

He looked upon it earnestly,
Without an accent of reply;
He watched it passing; it is flown: 620
Full on his eye the clear moon shone,
And thus he spake—"Whate'er my fate,
"I am no changeling—'tis too late:
"The reed in storms may bow and quiver,
"Then rise again; the tree must shiver. 625
"What Venice made me, I must be,
"Her foe in all, save love to thee:
"But thou art safe: oh, fly with me!"
He turned, but she is gone!
Nothing is there but the column stone. 630
Hath she sunk in the earth, or melted in air?
He saw not, he knew not; but nothing is there.

XXII.

The night is past, and shines the sun
As if that morn were a jocund one.
Lightly and brightly breaks away 635
The Morning from her mantle grey,
And the Noon will look on a sultry day.

Hark to the trump, and the drum,
And the mournful sound of the barbarous horn, 639
And the flap of the banners, that flit as they're borne,
And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's hum,
And the clash, and the shout, ' they come, they
come!'

The horsetails^s are plucked from the ground, and
the sword

From its sheath; and they form; and but wait for
the word.

Tartar, and Spahi, and Turcoman, 645

Strike your tents, and throng to the van;

Mount ye, spur ye, skirr the plain,

That the fugitive may flee in vain,

When he breaks from the town; and none escape,

Aged or young, in the Christian shape; 650

While your fellows on foot, in a fiery mass,

Bloodstain the breach through which they pass.

The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the rein;

Curved is each neck, and flowing each mane;

White is the foam of their champ on the bit: 655

The spears are uplifted; the matches are lit;

The cannon are pointed, and ready to roar,

And crush the wall they have crumbled before:

Forms in his phalanx each Janizar;
Alp at their head; his right arm is bare, 660
So is the blade of his scimitar;
The khan and the pachas are all at their post;
The vizier himself at the head of the host.
When the culverin's signal is fired, then on;
Leave not in Corinth a living one— 665
A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,
A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls.
God and the prophet—Alla Hu!
Up to the skies with that wild halloo!
« There the breach lies for passage, the ladder to
scale; 670
« And your hands on your sabres, and how should
ye fail?
« He who first downs with the red cross may crave
« His heart's dearest wish; let him ask it, and
have! »
Thus uttered Coumourgi, the dauntless vizier;
The reply was the brandish of sabre and spear, 675
And the shout of fierce thousands in joyous ire:—
Silence—hark to the signal—fire!

XXIII.

As the wolves, that headlong go
On the stately buffalo,
Though with fiery eyes, and angry roar, 680
And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,
He tramples on earth, or tosses on high
The foremost, who rush on his strength but to die:
Thus against the wall they went,
Thus the first were backward bent; 685
Many a bosom, sheathed in brass,
Strewed the earth like broken glass,
Shivered by the shot, that tore
The ground whereon they moved no more:
Even as they fell, in files they lay, 90
Like the mower's grass at the close of day,
When his work is done on the levelled plain;
Such was the fall of the foremost slain.

XXIV.

As the spring-tides, with heavy plash,
From the cliffs invading dash 695
Huge fragments, sapped by the ceaseless flow,
Till white and thundering down they go,

Like the avalanche's snow
On the Alpine vales below;
Thus at length, outbreathed and worn, 700
Corinth's sons were downward borne
By the long and oft renewed
Charge of the Moslem multitude.
In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell,
Heaped, by the host of the infidel, 705
Hand to hand, and foot to foot:
Nothing there, save death, was mute;
Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry
For quarter, or for victory,
Mingle there with the volleying thunder, 710
Which makes the distant cities wonder
How the sounding battle goes,
If with them, or for their foes;
If they must mourn, or may rejoice
In that annihilating voice, 715
Which pierces the deep hills through and through
With an echo dread and new:
You might have heard it, on that day,
O'er Salamis and Megara;
(We have heard the hearers say,) 720
Even unto Piræus bay.

XXV.

From the point of encountering blades to the hilt,
Sabres and swords with blood were gilt.

But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,
And all but the after carnage done. 725

Shriller shrieks now mingling come
From within the plundered dome :

Hark to the haste of flying feet,
That splash in the blood of the slippery street ;
But here and there, where 'vantage ground 730
Against the foe may still be found,

Desperate groups, of twelve or ten,
Make a pause, and turn again—
With banded backs against the wall,
Fiercely stand, or fighting fall. 735

There stood an old man—his hairs were white,
But his veteran arm was full of might :

So gallantly bore he the brunt of the fray,
The dead before him, on that day,
In a semicircle lay ; 740
Still he combated unwounded,

Though retreating, unsurrounded.

Many a scar of former fight
Lurked beneath his corslet bright ;

But of every wound his body bore, 745
Each and all had been ta'en before:
Though aged he was, so iron of limb,
Few of our youth could cope with him;
And the foes, whom he singly kept at bay,
Outnumbered his thin hairs of silver gray. 750
From right to left his sabre swept:
Many an Othman mother wept
Sons that were unborn, when dipped
His weapon first in Moslem gore,
Ere his years could count a score. 755
Of all he might have been the sire
Who fell that day beneath his ire:
For, sonless left long years ago,
His wrath made many a childless foe;
And since the day, when in the strait⁹ 760
His only boy had met his fate,
His parent's iron hand did doom
More than a human hecatomb.
It shades by carnage be appeased,
Pairoclus' spirit less was pleased 765
Than his, Minotti's son, who died
Where Asia's bounds and ours divide.
Buried he lay, where thousands before

For thousands of years were inhumed on the shore:
What of them is left, to tell 770
Where they lie, and how they fell?
Not a stone on their turf, nor a bone in their graves;
But they live in the verse that immortally saves.

XXVI.

Hark to the Allah shout! a band
Of the Mussulman bravest and best is at hand:
Their leader's nervous arm is bare, 776
Swifter to smite, and never to spare—
Unclothed to the shoulder it waves them on;
Thus in the fight is he ever known:
Others a gaudier garb may show, 780
To tempt the spoil of the greedy foe;
Many a hand's on a richer hilt,
But none on a steel more ruddily gilt;
Many a loftier turban may wear,—
Alp is but known by the white arm bare; 785
Look through the thick of the fight, 'tis there!
There is not a standard on that shore
So well advanced the ranks before;
There is not a banner in Moslem war
Will lure the Delhis half so far; 790

It glances like a falling star!

Where'er that mighty arm is seen,
The bravest be, or late have been;
There the craven cries for quarter

Vainly to the vengeful Tartar;

795

Or the hero, silent lying,

Scorns to yield a groan in dying;

Mustering his last feeble blow

'Gainst the nearest levelled foe,

Though faint beneath the mutual wound, 800

Grappling on the gory ground.

XXVII.

Still the old man stood erect,

And Alp's career a moment checked.

"Yield thee, Minotti; quarter take,

"For thine own, thy daughter's sake." 805

"Never, renegado, never!

"Though the life of thy gift would last for ever."

"Francesca!—Oh my promised bride!

"Must she too perish by thy pride?"

"She is safe."—"Where? where?"—"In heaven;

"From whence thy traitor soul is driven— 811

« Far from thee, and undefiled. »

Grimly then Minotti smiled,

As he saw Alp staggering bow

Before his words, as with a blow. 815

« Oh God! when died she? »—« Yesternight—

« Nor weep I for her spirit's flight:

« None of my pure race shall be

« Slaves to Mahomet and thee—

« Come on! »—That challenge is in vain— 820

Alp's already with the slain!

While Minotti's words were wreaking

More revenge in bitter speaking

Than his falchion's point had found,

Had the time allowed to wound, 825

From within the neighbouring porch

Of a long defended church,

Where the last and desperate few

Would the failing fight renew,

The sharp shot dashed Alp to the ground; 830

Ere an eye could view the wound

That crashed through the brain of the infidel,

Round he spun, and down he fell;

A flash like fire within his eyes

Blazed, as he bent no more to rise, 835

And then eternal darkness sunk
Through all the palpitating trunk;
Nought of life left, save a quivering
Where his limbs were slightly shivering:
They turned him on his back; his breast 840
And brow were stained with gore and dust,
And through his lips the life-blood oozed,
From its deep veins lately loosed;
But in his pulse there was no throb,
Nor on his lips one dying sob; 845
Sigh, nor word, nor struggling breath
Heralded his way to death:
Ere his very thought could pray,
Unanealed he passed away,
Without a hope from mercy's aid,— 850
To the last a renegade.

XXVIII.

Fearfully the yell arose.
Of his followers, and his foes;
These in joy, in fury those:
Then again in conflict mixing, 855
Clashing swords, and spears transfixing,

Interchanged the blow and thrust,
Hurling warriors in the dust.
Street by street, and foot by foot,
Still Minotti dares dispute 860
The latest portion of the land
Left beneath his high command;
With him, aiding heart and hand,
The remnant of his gallant band.
Still the church is tenable, 865
Whence issued late the fated ball
That half avenged the city's fall,
When Alp, her fierce assailant, fell:
Thither bending sternly back,
They leave before a bloody track; 870
And, with their faces to the foe,
Dealing wounds with every blow,
The chief, and his retreating train,
Join to those within the fane:
There they yet may breathe awhile, 875
Sheltered by the massy pile.

XXIX.

Brief breathing-time! the turbaned host,
With added ranks and raging boast,

Press onwards with such strength and heat,
Their numbers balk their own retreat; 880
For narrow the way that led to the spot
Where still the Christians yielded not;
And the foremost, if fearful, may vainly try
Through the massy column to turn and fly;
They perforce must do or die. 885
They die; but ere their eyes could close
Avengers o'er their bodies rose;
Fresh and furious, fast they fill
The ranks unthinned, though slaughtered still;
And faint the weary Christians wax 890
Before the still renewed attacks:
And now the Othmans gain the gate;
Still resists its iron weight,
And still, all deadly aimed and hot,
From every crevice comes the shot; 895
From every shattered window pour
The volleys of the sulphurous shower:
But the portal wavering grows and weak—
The iron yields, the hinges creak—
It bends—it falls—and all is o'er; 900
Lost Corinth may resist no more!

XXX.

Darkly, sternly, and all alone,
Minotti stood o'er the altar stone :
Madonna's face upon him shone,
Painted in heavenly hues above, 905
With eyes of light and looks of love ;
And placed upon that holy shrine
To fix our thoughts on things divine,
When pictured there, we kneeling see
Her, and the boy-God on her knee, 910
Smiling sweetly on each prayer
To heaven, as if to waft it there.
Still she smiled ; even now she smiles,
Though slaughter streams along her aisles :
Minotti lifted his aged eye, 915
And made the sign of a cross with a sigh,
Then seized a torch which blazed thereby ;
And still he stood, while, with steel and flame,
Inward and onward the Mussulman came.

XXXI.

The vaults beneath the mosaic stone 920
Contained the dead of ages gone ;

Their names were on the graven floor,
But now illegible with gore ;
The carved crests, and curious hues
The varied marble's veins diffuse, 925
Were sineared, and slippery—stained, and strown
With broken swords, and helmets o'erthrown :
There were dead above, and the dead below
Lay cold in many a confined row ;
You might see them piled in sable state, 930
By a pale light through a gloomy grate ;
But War had entered their dark caves,
And stored along the vaulted graves
Her sulphurous treasures, thickly spread
In masses by the fleshless dead : 935
Here, throughout the siege, had been
The Christians' chiefest magazine ;
To these a late formed train now led,
Minotti's last and stern resource
Against the foes o'erwhelming force. 940

XXXII.

The foe came on, and few remain
To strive, and those must strive in vain :

For lack of further lives, to slake
The thirst of vengeance now awake,
With barbarous blows they gash the dead, 945
And lop the already lifeless head,
And fell the statues from their niche,
And spoil the shrines of offerings rich,
And from each other's rude hands wrest
The silver vessels saints had blessed. 950
To the high altar on they go ;
Oh, but it made a glorious show !
On its table still behold
The cup of consecrated gold ;
Massy and deep, a glittering prize, 955
Brightly it sparkles to plunderers' eyes :
That morn it held the holy wine,
Converted by Christ to his blood so divine,
Which his worshippers drank at the break of day,
To shrive their souls ere they joined in the fray. 960
Still a few drops within it lay ;
And round the sacred table glow
Twelve lofty lamps, in splendid row,
From the purest metal cast ;
A spoil—the richest, and the last. 965

XXXIII.

So near they came, the nearest stretched

To grasp the spoil he almost reached,

When old Minotti's hand

Touched with the torch the train—

'Tis fired!

970

Spire, vaults, the shrine, the spoil, the slain,

The turbaned victors, the Christian band,

All that of living or dead remain,

Hurled on high with the shivered fane,

In one wild roar expired!

975

The shattered town—the walls thrown down—

The waves a moment backward bent—

The hills that shake, although unrent,

As if an earthquake passed—

The thousand shapeless things all driven

980

In cloud and flame athwart the heaven,

By that tremendous blast—

Proclaimed the desperate conflict o'er

On that too long afflicted shore:

Up to the sky like rockets go

985

All that mingled there below:

Many a tall and goodly man,

Scorched and shrivelled to a span,

When he fell to earth again
Like a cinder strewed the plain : 990
Down the ashes shower like rain ;
Some fell in the gulf, which received the sprinkles
With a thousand circling wrinkles ;
Some fell on the shore, but, far away,
Scattered o'er the isthmus lay ; 995
Christian or Moslem, which be they ?
Let their mothers see and say !
When in cradled rest they lay,
And each nursing mother smiled
On the sweet sleep of her child, 1000
Little deemed she such a day
Would rend those tender limbs away.
Not the matrons that them bore
Could discern their offspring more ;
That one moment left no trace 1005
More of human form or face
Save a scattered scalp or bone :
And down came blazing rafters, strown
Around, and many a falling stone,
Deeply dinted in the clay, 1010
All blackened there and reeking lay.
All the living things that heard

That deadly earth shock disappeared :
The wild birds flew ; the wild dogs fled,
And howling left the unburied dead ; 1015
The camels from their keepers broke ;
The distant steer forsook the yoke—
The nearer steed plunged o'er the plain,
And burst his girth, and tore his rein ;
The bull-frog's note, from out the marsh, 1020
Deep-mouthed arose, and doubly harsh ;
The wolves yelled on the caverned hill,
Where echo rolled in thunder still ;
The jackal's troop, in gathered cry, 1025
Bayed from afar complainingly,
With a mixed and mournful sound,
Like crying babe, and beaten hound :
With sudden wing, and ruffled breast,
The eagle left his rocky nest,
And mounted nearer to the sun, 1030
The clouds beneath him seemed so dun ;
Their smoke assailed his startled beak,
And made him higher soar and shriek—
Thus was Corinth lost and won !

NOTES.

Note 1, page 114, line 21.

The Turcoman hath left his herd.

The life of the Turcomans is wandering and patriarchal: they dwell in tents.

Note 2, page 117, line 13.

Coumourgi—he whose closing scene.

Ali Conmourgi, the favourite of three sultans, and Grand Vizier to Achmet III. after recovering Peloponnesus from the Venetians in one campaign, was mortally wounded in the next, against the Germans, at the battle of Peterwaradin, (in the plain of Carlowitz) in Hungary, endeavouring to rally his guards. He died of his wounds next day. His last order was the decapitation of General Breuner, and some other German prisoners; and his last words, « Oh that I could thus serve all « the Christian dogs ! » a speech and act not unlike one of Caligula. He was a young man of great ambition and unbounded presumption: on being told that Prince Eugene, then opposed to him, « was a great general, » he said, « I shall become a greater, and at his expense »

Note 3, page 130, line 7.

There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea.

The reader need hardly be reminded that there are no perceptible tides in the Mediterranean.

Note 4, page 131, line 20.

And their white tusks crunched o'er the whiter skull.

~This spectacle I have seen, such as described, beneath the

wall of the Seraglio at Constantinople, in the little cavities worn by the Bosphorus in the rock, a narrow terrace of which projects between the wall and the water. I think the fact is also mentioned in Hobhouse's Travels. The bodies were probably those of some refractory Janizaries.

Note 5, page 132, line 6.

And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair.

This tuft, or long lock, is left from a superstition that Mahomet will draw them into Paradise by it.

Note 6, page 134, line 15.

I must here acknowledge a close, though unintentional, resemblance in these twelve lines to a passage in an unpublished poem of Mr. Coleridge, called « Christabel. » It was not till after these lines were written that I heard that wild and singularly original and beautiful poem recited; and the MS. of that production I never saw till very recently, by the kindness of Mr. Coleridge himself, who, I hope, is convinced that I have not been a wilful plagiarist. The original idea undoubtedly pertains to Mr. Coleridge, whose poem has been composed above fourteen years. Let me conclude by a hope that he will not longer delay the publication of a production, of which I can only add my mite of approbation to the applause of far more competent judges.

Note 7, page 140, line 6.

There is a light cloud by the moon—

I have been told that the idea expressed from lines 597 to 603 has been admired by those whose approbation is valuable. I am glad of it: but it is not original—at least not mine; it may be found much better expressed in pages 182-3-4 of the English version of « Vathek » (I forget the precise page of the French), a work to which I have before referred; and never recur to, or read, without a renewal of gratification.

Note 8, page 142, line 7.

The horsetails are plucked from the ground, and the sword.

The horsetail, fixed upon a lance, a Pasha's standard.

Note 9, page 147, line 16.

And since the day, when in the strait.

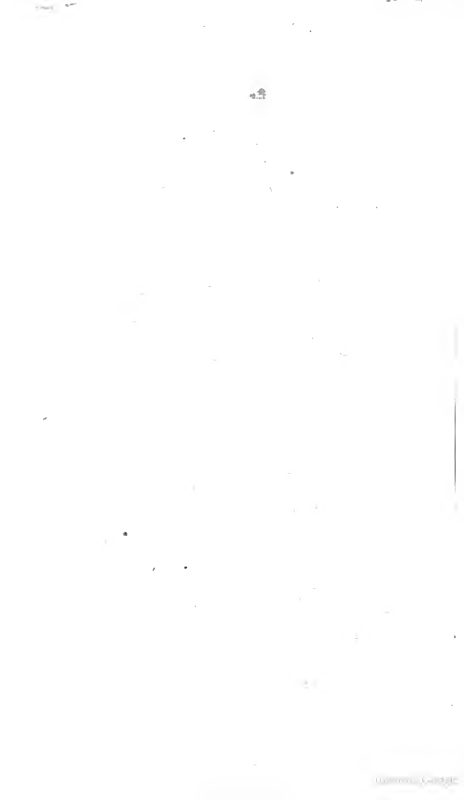
In the naval battle at the mouth of the Dardanelles, between the Venetians and the Turks.

Note 10, page 159, line 12.

The jackal's troop, in gathered cry.

I believe I have taken a poetical license to transplant the jackal from Asia. In Greece I never saw nor heard these animals; but among the ruins of Ephesus I have heard them by hundreds. They haunt ruins, and follow armies.

PARISINA.



TO
SCROPE BERDMORE DAVIES, Esq.

THE FOLLOWING POEM

IS INSCRIBED

BY ONE WHO HAS LONG ADMIRER HIS TALENTS
AND VALUED HIS FRIENDSHIP.

Jan. 22, 1816.

The following poem is grounded on a circumstance mentioned in Gibbon's « Antiquities of the House of Brunswick. »—I am aware, that in modern times the delicacy or fastidiousness of the reader may deem such subjects unfit for the purposes of poetry. The Greek dramatists, and some of the best of our old English writers, were of a different opinion: as Alfieri and Schiller have also been, more recently, upon the continent. The following extract will explain the facts on which the story is founded. The name of *Azo* is substituted for Nicholas, as more metrical.

« Under the reign of Nicholas III. Ferrara was polluted with
« a domestic tragedy. By the testimony of an attendant,
« and his own observation, the Marquis of Este discovered
« the incestuous loves of his wife Parisina, and Hugo his
« bastard son, a beautiful and valiant youth. They were
« beheaded in the castle by the sentence of a father and
« husband, who published his shame, and survived their
« execution. He was unfortunate, if they were guilty; if they
« were innocent, he was still more nnfortunate; nor is there
« any possible situation in which I can sincerely approve
« the last act of the justice of a parent. »—*Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works*, vol. 3d. p. 470, new edition.

PARISINA.

I.

IT is the hour when from the boughs
The nightingale's high note is heard;
It is the hour when lovers' vows
Seem sweet in every whispered word;
And gentle winds, and waters near, 5
Make music to the lonely ear.
Each flower the dews have lightly wet,
And in the sky the stars are met,
And on the wave is deeper blue,
And on the leaf a browner hue, 10
And in the heaven that clear obscure,
So softly dark, and darkly pure,
Which follows the decline of day,
As twilight melts beneath the moon away.

II.

But it is not to list to the waterfall 15
That Parisina leaves her hall,

And it is not to gaze on the heavenly light
That the lady walks in the shadow of night;
And if she sits in Este's bower,
'Tis not for the sake of its full-blown flower— 20
She listens—but not for the nightingale—
Though her ear expects as soft a tale.
There glides a step through the foliage thick,
And her cheek grows pale—and her heart beats quick.
There whispers a voice through the rustling leaves,
And her blush returns, and her bosom heaves : 26
A moment more—and they shall meet—
'Tis past—her lover's at her feet.

III.

And what unto them is the world beside
With all its change of time and tide? 30
Its living things—its earth and sky—
Are nothing to their mind and eye.
And heedless as the dead are they
Of aught around, above, beneath;
As if all else had passed away, . 35
They only for each other breathe;
Their very sighs are full of joy
So deep, that did it not decay,

That happy madness would destroy
 The hearts which feel its fiery sway : 40
 Of guilt, of peril, do they deem
 In that tumultuous tender dream?
 Who that have felt that passion's power,
 Or paused, or feared in such an hour?
 Or thought how brief such moments last : 45
 But yet—they are already past !
 Alas ! we must awake before
 We know such vision comes no more.

IV.

With many a lingering look they leave
 The spot of guilty gladness past ; 50
 And though they hope, and vow, they grieve,
 As if that parting were the last.
 The frequent sigh—the long embrace—
 The lip that there would cling for ever,
 While gleams on Parisina's face 55
 The Heaven she fears will not forgive her,
 As if each calmly conscious star
 Beheld her frailty from afar—
 The frequent sigh, the long embrace,
 Yet binds them to their trysting-place. 60

But it must come, and they must part
In fearful heaviness of heart,
With all the deep and shuddering chill
Which follows fast the deeds of ill.

V.

And Hugo is gone to his lonely bed, 65
To covet there another's bride ;
But she must lay her conscious head
A husband's trusting heart beside.
But fevered in her sleep she seems,
And red her cheek with troubled dreams, 70
And mutters she in her unrest
A name she dare not breathe by day,
And clasps her Lord unto the breast
Which pants for one away :
And he to that embrace awakes, 75
And, happy in the thought, mistakes
That dreaming sigh, and warm caress,
For such as he was wont to bless ;
And could in very fondness weep
O'er her who loves him even in sleep. 80

VI.

He clasped her sleeping to his heart,
And listened to each broken word :
He hears—Why doth Prince Azo start,
As if the Archangel's voice he heard ?
And well he may—a deeper doom 85
Could scarcely thunder o'er his tomb,
When he shall wake to sleep no more,
And stand the eternal throne before.
And well he may—his earthly peace
Upon that sound is doomed to cease. 90
That sleeping whisper of a name
Bespeaks her guilt and Azo's shame.
And whose that name? that o'er his pillow
Sounds fearful as the breaking billow,
Which rolls the plank upon the shore, 95
And dashes on the pointed rock
The wretch who sinks to rise no more,—
So came upon his soul the shock.
And whose that name? 'tis Hugo's,—his—
In sooth he had not deemed of this!— 100
'Tis Hugo's,—he, the child of one
He loved—his own all-evil son—

The offspring of his wayward youth,
When he betrayed Bianca's truth,
The maid whose folly could confide 105
In him who made her not his bride.

VII.

He plucked his poignard in its sheath,
But sheathed it ere the point was bare—
Howe'er unworthy now to breathe,
He could not slay a thing so fair— 110
At least, not smiling—sleeping—there—
Nay, more :—he did not wake her then,
But gazed upon her with a glance
Which, had she roused her from her trance,
Had frozen her sense to sleep again— 115
And o'er his brow the burning lamp
Gleamed on the dew-drops big and damp.
She spake no more—but still she slumbered—
While, in his thought, her days are numbered.

VIII.

And with the morn he sought, and found, 120
In many a tale from those around,
The proof of all he feared to know,
Their present guilt, his future woe ;

The long-conniving damsels seek

To save themselves, and would transfer 125

The guilt—the shame—the doom—to her :

Concealment is no more—they speak

All circumstance which may compel

Full credence to the tale they tell :

And Azo's tortured heart and ear 130

Have nothing more to feel or hear.

IX.

He was not one who brooked delay :

Within the chamber of his state,

The chief of Este's ancient sway

Upon his throne of judgment sate ; 135

His nobles and his guards are there,—

Before him is the sinful pair ;

Both young,—and *one* how passing fair !

With swordless belt, and fettered hand,

Oh, Christ ! that thus a son should stand 140

Before a father's face !

Yet thus must Hugo meet his sire,

And hear the sentence of his ire,

The tale of his disgrace !

And yet he seems not overcome, 145

Although, as yet, his voice be dumb.

X.

And still, and pale, and silently

Did Parisina wait her doom ;

How changed since last her speaking eye

Glanced gladness round the glittering room, 150

Where high-born men were proud to wait—

Where Beauty watched to imitate

Her gentle voice—her lovely mien—

And gather from her air and gait

The graces of its queen : 155

Then,—had her eye in sorrow wept,

A thousand warriors forth had leapt,

A thousand swords had sheathless shone,

And made her quarrel all their own.

Now,—what is she ? and what are they ? 160

Can she command, or these obey ?

All silent and unheeding now,

With downcast eyes and knitting brow,

And folded arms, and freezing air,

And lips that scarce their scorn forbear, 165

Her knights and dames, her court—is there :

And he, the chosen one, whose lance

Had yet been couched before her glance,

Who—were his arm a moment free—

Had died or gained her liberty ;
 The minion of his father's bride,—
 He, too, is fettered by her side ;
 Nor sees her swoln and full eye swim
 Less for her own despair than him :
 Those lids o'er which the violet vein— 175
 Wandering, leaves a tender stain,
 Shining through the smoothest white
 That e'er did softest kiss invite—
 Now seemed with hot and lived glow
 To press, not shade, the orbs below ; 180
 Which glance so heavily, and fill,
 As tear on tear grows gathering still.

XI.

And he for her had also wept,
 But for the eyes that on him gazed :
 His sorrow, if he felt it, slept ; 185
 Stern and erect his brow was raised.
 Whate'er the grief his soul avowed,
 He would not shrink before the crowd ;
 But yet he dared not look on her :
 Remembrance of the hours that were— 190
 His guilt—his love—his present state—

His father's wrath—all good men's hate—
 His earthly, his eternal fate—
 And hers,—oh, hers!—he dared not throw
 One look upon that deathlike brow! 195
 Else had his rising heart betrayed
 Remorse for all the wreck it made.

XII.

And Azo spake :—" But yesterday
 " I gloried in a wife and son ;
 " That dream this morning passed away ; 200
 " Ere day declines, I shall have none.
 " My life must linger on alone ;
 " Well,—let that pass,—there breathes not one
 " Who would not do as I have done :
 " Those ties are broken—not by me ; 205
 " Let that too pass ;—the doom's prepared !
 " Hugo, the priest awaits on thee,
 " And then—thy crime's reward !
 " Away ! address thy prayers to Heaven,
 " Before its evening stars are met— 210
 " Learn if thou there canst be forgiven ;
 " Its mercy may absolve thee yet.
 " But here, upon the earth beneath,

- “ There is no spot where thou and I
“ Together, for an hour, could breathe : 215
“ Farewell! I will not see thee die—
“ But thou, frail thing! shalt view his head—
“ Away! I cannot speak the rest :
“ Go! woman of the wanton breast;
“ Not I, but thou his blood dost shed : 220
“ Go! if that sight thou canst outlive,
“ And joy thee in the life I give. ”

XIII.

And here stern Azo hid his face—
For on his brow the swelling vein
Throbb'd as if back upon his brain 225
The hot blood ebb'd and flow'd again;
And therefore bow'd he for a space,
And pass'd his shaking hand along
His eye, to veil it from the throng;
While Hugo raised his chained hands, 230
And for a brief delay demands
His father's ear: the silent sire
Forbids not what his words require.

“ It is not that I dread the death—

- “ For thou hast seen me by thy side 235
“ All redly through the battle ride,
“ And that not once a useless brand
“ Thy slaves have wrested from my hand,
“ Hath shed more blood in cause of thine,
“ Than e’er can stain the axe of mine : 240
“ Thou gav’st, and may’st resume my breath,
“ A gift for which I thank thee not ;
“ Nor are my mother’s wrongs forgot,
“ Her slighted love and ruined name,
“ Her offspring’s heritage of shame ; 245
“ But she is in the grave, where he,
“ Her son, thy rival, soon shall be.
“ Her broken heart—my severed head—
“ Shall witness for thee from the dead
“ How trusty and how tender were 250
“ Thy youthful love—paternal care.
“ ’Tis true, that I have done thee wrong—
“ But wrong for wrong—this deemed thy bride,
“ The other victim of thy pride,
“ Thou know’st for me was destined long. 255
“ Thou saw’st, and coveted’st her charms—
“ And with thy very crime—my birth,
“ Thou taunted’st me—as little worth ;

- “ A match ignoble for her arms,
“ Because, forsooth, I could not claim 260
“ The lawful heirship of thy name,
“ Nor sit on Este’s lineal throne :
“ Yet, were a few short summers mine,
“ My name should more than Este’s shine
“ With honours all my own. 265
“ I had a sword—and have a breast
“ That should have won as haught^a a crest
“ As ever waved along the line
“ Of all these sovereign sires of thine.
“ Not always knightly spurs are worn 270
“ The brightest of the better born ;
“ And mine have lanced my courser’s flank
“ Before proud chiefs of princely rank,
“ When charging to the cheering cry
“ Of ‘ Este and of Victory ! ’ 275
“ I will not plead the cause of crime,
“ Not sue thee to redeem from time
“ A few brief hours or days that must
“ At length roll o’er my reckless dust ;—
“ Such maddening moments as my past ; 280
“ They could not, and they did not, last—
“ Albeit my birth and name be base,

- “ And thy nobility of race
“ Disdained to deck a thing like me—
“ Yet in my lineaments they trace 285
“ Some features of my father’s face,
“ And in my spirit—all of thee.
“ From thee—this tamelessness of heart—
“ From thee—nay, wherefore dost thou start?—
“ From thee in all their vigour came 290
“ My arm of strength; my soul of flame—
“ Thou didst not give me life alone,
“ But all that made me more thine own.
“ See what thy guilty love hath done!
“ Repaid thee with too like a son! 295
“ I am no bastard in my soul,
“ For that, like thine, abhorred controul :
“ And for my breath, that hasty boon
“ Thou gav’st and wilt resume so soon,
“ I valued it no more than thou, 300
“ When rose thy casque above thy brow,
“ And we, all side by side, have striven,
“ And o’er the dead our coursers driven :
“ The past is nothing—and at last
“ The future can but be the past; 305
“ Yet would I that I then had died :

“ For though thou work’dst my mother’s ill,
“ And made thy own my destined bride,
“ I feel thou art my father still ;
“ And, harsh as sounds thy hard decree, 310
“ ’Tis not unjust, although from thee.
“ Begot in sin, to die in shame,
“ My life begun and ends the same :
“ As erred the sire, so erred the son,
“ And thou must punish both in one. 315
“ My crime seems worst to human view.
“ But God must judge between us too! ”

XIV.

He ceased—and stood with folded arms,
On which the circling fetters sounded ;
And not an ear but felt as wounded, 320
Of all the chiefs that there were ranked,
When those dull chains in meeting clanked :
Till Parisina’s fatal charms
Again attracted every eye—
Would she thus hear him doomed to die ! 325
She stood, I said, all pale and still,
The living cause of Hugo’s ill :

Her eyes unmoved, but full and wide,
Not once had turned to either side—
Nor once did those sweet eyelids close, 330
Or shade the glance o'er which they rose,
But round their orbs of deepest blue
The circling white dilated grew—
And there with glassy gaze she stood
As ice were in her curdled blood; 335
But every now and then a tear
 So large and slowly gathered shid
 From the long dark fringe of that fair lid,
It was a thing to see, not hear!
And those who saw, it did surprise, 340
Such drops could fall from human eyes.
To speak she thought—the imperfect note
Was choked within her swelling throat,
Yet seemed in that low hollow groan
Her whole heart gushing in the tone. 345
It ceased—again she thought to speak,
Then burst her voice in one long shriek,
And to the earth she fell like stone
Or statue from its base o'erthrown,
More like a thing that ne'er had life,— 350
A monument of Azo's wife,—

Than her, that living guilty thing,
Whose every passion was a sting,
Which urged to guilt, but could not bear
That guilt's detection and despair. 355
But yet she lived—and all too soon
Recovered from that death-like swoon—
But scarce to reason—every sense
Had been o'erstrung by pangs intense ;
And each frail fibre of her brain 360
(As bow-strings, when relaxed by rain,
The erring arrow launch aside)
Sent forth her thoughts all wild and wide—
The past a blank, the future black,
With glimpses of a dreary track, 365
Like lightning on the desert path,
When midnight storms are mustering wrath.
She feared—she felt that something ill
Lay on her soul, so deep and chill—
That there was sin and shame she knew ; 370
That some one was to die—but who?
She had forgotten :—did she breathe?
Could this be still the earth beneath?
The sky above, and men around ;
Or were they fiends who now so frowned 375

On one, before whose eyes each eye
 Till then had smiled in sympathy?
 All was confused and undefined,
 To her all-jarred and wandering mind;
 A chaos of wild hopes and fears: 380
 And now in laughter, now in tears,
 But madly still in each extreme,
 She strove with that convulsive dream;
 For so it seemed on her to break:
 Oh! vainly must she strive to wake! 385

XV.

The Convent bells are ringing,
 But mournfully and slow;
 In the grey square turret swinging,
 With a deep sound, to and fro.
 Heavily to the heart they go! 390
 Hark! the hymn is singing—
 The song for the dead below,
 Or the living who shortly shall be so!
 For a departing being's soul
 The death-hymn peals and the hollow bells knoll:
 He is near his mortal goal; 396

Kneeling at the Friar's knee;
Sad to hear—and piteous to see—
Kneeling on the bare cold ground,
With the block before and the guards around—400
And the headsman with his bare arm ready,
That the blow may be both swift and steady,
Feels if the axe be sharp and true—
Since he set its edge anew:
While the crowd in a speechless circle gather 405
To see the Son fall by the doom of the Father.

XVI.

It is a lovely hour as yet
Before the summer sun shall set,
Which rose upon that heavy day,
And mocked it with his steadiest ray; 410
And his evening beams are shed
Full on Hugo's fated head,
As his last confession pouring
To the monk, his doom deploring
In penitential holiness, 415
He bends to hear his accents bless
With absolution such as may
Wipe our mortal stains away.

That high sun on his head did glisten
As he there did bow and listen— 420
And the rings of chesnut hair
Curled half down his neck so bare;
But brighter still the beam was thrown
Upon the axe which near him shone
With a clear and ghastly glitter—
Oh! that parting hour was bitter! 425
Even the stern stood chilled with awe:
Dark the crime, and just the law—
Yet they shuddered as they saw.

XVII.

The parting prayers are said and over
Of that false son—and daring lover! 430
His beads and sins were all recounted,
His hours to their last minute mounted—
His mantling cloak before was stripped,
His bright brown locks must now be clipped,
'Tis done—all closely are they shorn— 435
The vest which till this moment worn—
The scarf which Parisina gave—
Must not adorn him to the grave.
Even that must now be thrown aside,

And o'er his eyes the kerchief tied; 440

But no—that last indignity

Shall ne'er approach his haughty eye.

All feelings seemingly subdued,

In deep disdain were half renewed,

When headman's hands prepared to bind 445

Those eyes which would not brook such blind :

As if they dared not look on death.

“ No—yours my forfeit blood and breath—

“ These hands are chained—but let me die

“ At least with an unshackled eye— 450

“ Strike: ”—and as the word he said,

Upon the block he bowed his head;

These the last accents Hugo spoke :

“ Strike ”—and flashing fell the stroke—

Rolled the head—and, gushing, sunk 455

Back the stained and heaving trunk,

In the dust, which each deep vein

Slaked with its ensanguined rain;

His eyes and lips a moment quiver,

Convulsed and quick—then fix for ever. 460

He died, as erring man should die,

Without display, without parade ;

Meekly had he bowed and prayed,
As not disdaining priestly aid,
Nor desperate of all hope on high. 465
And while before the Prior kneeling,
His heart was weaned from earthly feeling;
His wrathful sire—his paramour—
What were they in such an hour?
No more reproach—no more despair; 470
No thought but heaven—no word but prayer—
Save the few which from him broke,
When, bared to meet the headman's stroke,
He claimed to die with eyes unbound,
His sole adieu to those around. 475

XVIII.

Still as the lips that closed in death,
Each gazer's bosom held his breath:
But yet, afar, from man to man,
A cold electric shiver ran,
As down the deadly blow descended 480
On him whose life and love thus ended;
And with a hushing sound comprest,
A sigh shrunk back on every breast;
But no more thrilling noise rose there,

Beyond the blow that to the block 485

Pierced through with forced and sullen shock,
 Save one :—what cleaves the silent air
 So madly shrill—so passing wild ?
 That, as a mother's o'er her child,
 Done to death by sudden blow, 490
 To the sky these accents go,
 Like a soul's in endless woe.

Through Azo's palace-lattice driven,
 That horrid voice ascends to heaven,
 And every eye is turned thereon ; 495
 But sound and sight alike are gone !
 It was a woman's shriek—and ne'er
 In madlier accents rose despair ;
 And those who heard it, as it past,
 In mercy wished it were the last. 500

XIX.

Hugo is fallen ; and, from that hour,
 No more in palace, hall, or bower,
 Was Parisina heard or seen :
 Her name—as if she ne'er had been—
 Was banished from each lip and ear, 505
 Like words of wantonness or fear ;

And from Prince Azo's voice, by none
Was mention heard of wife or son;
No tomb—no memory had they;
Theirs was unconsecrated clay; 510
At least the knight's who died that day.
But Parisina's fate lies hid
Like dust beneath the coffin lid:
Whether in convent she abode,
And won to heaven her dreary road, 515
By blighted and remorseful years
Of scourge, and fast, and sleepless tears;
Or if she fell by bowl or steel,
For that dark love she dared to feel;
Or if, upon the moment smote, 520
She died by tortures less remote;
Like him she saw upon the block,
With heart that shared the headman's shock,
In quickened brokenness that came,
In pity, o'er her shattered frame, 525
None knew—and none can ever know:
But whatsoe'er its end below,
Her life began and closed in woe!

XX.

And Azo found another bride,
And goodly sons grew by his side; 530
But none so lovely and so brave
As him who withered in the grave;
Or if they were—on his cold eye.
Their growth but glanced unheeded by,
Or noticed with a smothered sigh. 535
But never tear his cheek descended,
And never smile his brow unbended;
And o'er that fair broad brow were wrought
The intersected lines of thought;
Those furrows which the burning share 540
Of sorrow ploughs untimely there;
Scars of the lacerating mind
Which the Soul's war doth leave behind.
He was past all mirth or woe:
Nothing more remained below 545
But sleepless nights and heavy days,
A mind all dead to scorn or praise,
A heart which shunned itself—and yet
That would not yield—nor could forget,

Which when it least appeared to melt, 550
Intently thought—intensely felt :
The deepest ice which ever froze
Can only o'er the surface close—
The living stream lies quick below,
And flows—and cannot cease to flow. 555
Still was his sealed-up bosom haunted
By thoughts which Nature hath implanted ;
Too deeply rooted thence to vanish,
Howe'er our stifled tears we banish ;
When, struggling as they rise to start, 560
We check those waters of the heart,
They are not dried—those tears unshed
But flow back to the fountain head,
And resting in their spring more pure,
For ever in its depth endure, 565
Unseen, unwept, but uncongealed,
And cherished most where least revealed.
With inward starts of feeling left,
To throb o'er those of life bereft ;
Without the power to fill again 570
The desert gap which made his pain ;
Without the hope to meet them where
United souls shall gladness share,

With all the consciousness that he
Had only passed a just decree; 575
That they had wrought their doom of ill,
Yet Azo's age was wretched still.
The tainted branches of the tree,
 If lopped with care, a strength may give,
 By which the rest shall bloom and live 580
All greenly fresh and wildly free :
But if the lightning , in its wrath,
The waving boughs with fury scathe,
The massy trunk the ruin feels,
And never more a leaf reveals. 585

NOTES.

Note 1, page 167, line 14.

As twilight melts beneath the moon away.

The lines contained in Section I. were printed as set to music some time since: but belonged to the poem where they now appear, the greater part of which was composed prior to « Lara » and other compositions since published.

Note 2, page 179, line 9.

That should have won as haught a crest.

Haught—haughty—« Away haught man, thou art insulting me. »

Shakspeare, Richard II.

POEMS.



POEMS.

To——

— I.

WHEN all around grew drear and dark,
And reason half withheld her ray—
And hope but shed a dying spark
Which more misled my lonely way;

2.

In that deep midnight of the mind,
And that internal strife of heart,
When dreading to be deemed too kind,
The weak despair—the cold depart;

3.

When fortune changed—and love fled far,
And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,
Thou wert the solitary star
Which rose and set not to the last.

4.

Oh! blest be thine unbroken light!

That watched me as a seraph's eye,
And stood between me and the night,
For ever shining sweetly nigh.

5.

And when the cloud upon us came,
Which strove to blacken o'er thy ray—
Then purer spread its gentle flame,
And dashed the darkness all away.

6.

Still may thy spirit dwell on mine,
And teach it what to brave or brook—
There's more in one soft word of thine,
Than in the world's defied rebuke.

7.

Thou stood'st, as stands a lovely tree,
That still unbroke, though gently bent,
Still waves with fond fidelity
Its boughs above a monument.

8.

The winds might rend—the skies might pour,
But there thou wert—and still wouldst be

Devoted in the stormiest hour
To shed thy weeping leaves o'er me.

9.

But thou and thine shall know no blight,
Whatever fate on me may fall ;
For heaven in sunshine will requite
The kind—and thee the most of all.

10.

Then let the ties of baffled love
Be broken—thine will never break ;
Thy heart can feel—but will not move ;
Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.

11.

And these, when all was lost, beside,
Were found and still are fixed in thee—
And bearing still a breast so tried,
Earth is no desert—ev'n to me.

I.

BRIGHT be the place of thy soul !
No lovelier spirit than thine
E'er burst from its mortal control,
In the orbs of the blessed to shine.

On earth thou wert all but divine,
As thy soul shall immortally be;
And our sorrow may cease to repine,
When we know that thy God is with thee.

2.

Light be the turf of thy tomb!
May its verdure like emeralds be :
There should not be the shadow of gloom,
In aught that reminds us of thee.
Young flowers and an evergreen tree
May spring from the spot of thy rest :
But not cypress nor yew let us see;
For why should we mourn for the blest?

1.

WHEN we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

2.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow—
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

3.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well :—
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

4.

In secret we met—
In silence I grieve;
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.

If I should meet thee
 After long years,
 How should I greet thee?—
 With silence and tears.

1808.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC. *

« O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
 « Ducentium ortus ex animo : quater
 « Felix ! in imo qui scatentem
 « Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit »

Gray's Poemata.

I.

THERE'S not a joy the world can give like that it
 takes away,
 When the glow of early thought declines in feel-
 ing's dull decay;
 'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone,
 which fades so fast,
 But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth
 itself be past.

* These Verses were given by Lord Byron to Mr. Power,
 Strand, who has published them, with very beautiful music
 by Sir John Stevenson.

2.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck
of happiness,
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of
excess :

The magnet of their course is gone, or only points
in vain

The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never
stretch again.

3.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death
itself comes down ;

It cannot feel for other's woes, it dare not dream
its own ;

That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of
our tears,

And tho' the eye may sparkle still, 'tis where the
ice appears.

4.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth
distract the breast,

Through midnight hours that yield no more their
former hope of rest ;

'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret
wreath,
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and
grey beneath.

5.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I have
been,
Or weep as I could once have wept, o'er many a
vanished scene :
As springs in deserts found seem sweet, all brack-
ish though they be,
So midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears
would flow to me.

1815.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

THERE be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me :
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lulled winds seem dreaming,

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep ;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep :
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee ;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

Alas! they had been friends in Youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above:
And Life is thorny; and youth is vain:
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain:

* * * * *

But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs, which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

Coleridge's Christabel.

FARE THEE WELL!

FARE thee well! and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare *thee well* :
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.
Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er canst know again :
Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show !
Then thou wouldst at last discover
'Twas not well to spurn it so.
Though the world for this commend thee—
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe—
Though my many faults defaced me ;
Could no other arm be found
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound ?
Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not ;
Love may sink by slow decay,

But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away :
Still thine own its life retaineth—
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.
These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead ;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widowed bed.
And when thou wouldst solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say « Father ! »
Though his care she must forego ?
When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is prest,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had bless'd !
Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more may'st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.
All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know ;

All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Wither—yet with *thee* they go.
Every feeling hath been shaken ;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now :
But 'tis done—all words are idle—
Words from me are vainer still ;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will.—
Fare thee well !—thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Seared in heart, and lone, and blighted—
More than this I scarce can die.

ODE.

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

I.

WE do not curse thee, Waterloo !
Though Freedom's blood thy plain bedew ;
There 'twas shed, but is not sunk—
Rising from each gory trunk,

Like the Water-spout from ocean,
With a strong and growing motion—
It soars, and mingles in the air,
With that of lost LABEDOYERE—
With that of him whose honoured grave
Contains the « bravest of the brave. »
A crimson cloud it spreads and glows,
But shall return to whence it rose ;
When 'tis full 'twill burst asunder—
Never yet was heard such thunder
As then shall shake the world with wonder—
Never yet was seen such lightning,
As o'er heaven shall then be bright'ning!
Like the Wormwood Star foretold
By the sainted Seer of old,
Show'ring down a fiery flood,
Turning rivers into blood. »

II

The Chief has fallen, but not by you,
Vanquishers of Waterloo!
When the soldier citizen
Swayed not o'er his fellow men—

Save in deeds that led them on
Where Glory smiled on Freedom's son—
Who, of all the despots banded,
With that youthful chief competed?
Who could boast o'er France defeated,
Till lone Tyranny commanded?
Till, goaded by ambition's sting,
The Hero sunk into the King?
Then he fell;—So perish all,
Who would men by man enthrall!

III.

And thou too of the snow-white plume!
Whose realm refused thee ev'n a tomb;—
Better hadst thou still been leading
France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,
Than sold thyself to death and shame
For a meanly royal name;
Such as he of Naples wears,
Who thy blood-bought title bears.
Little didst thou deem, when dashing
On thy war-horse through the ranks,
Like a stream which burst its banks,
While helmets cleft, and sabres clashing,

Shone and shivered fast around thee—
Of the fate at last which found thee :
Was that haughty plume laid low
By a slave's dishonest blow ?
Once—as the Moon sways o'er the tide,
It rolled in air, the warrior's guide ;
Through the smoke-created night
Of the black and sulphurous fight,
The soldier rais'd his seeking eye
To catch that crest's ascendancy,—
And, as it onward rolling rose,
So moved his heart upon our foes.
There, where death's brief pang was quickest,
And the battle's wreck lay thickest,
Strew'd beneath the advancing banner
Of the eagle's burning crest—
(There with thunder-clouds to fan her,
Who could then her wing arrest—
Victory beaming from her breast?)
While the broken line enlarging
Fell, or fled along the plain ;
There be sure was MURAT charging !
There he ne'er shall charge again !

IV.

O'er glories gone the invaders march,
Weeps Triumph o'er each levell'd arch—
But let Freedom rejoice,
With her heart in her voice ;
But, her hand on her sword,
Doubly shall she be adored ;
France hath twice too well been taught
The « moral lesson » dearly bought—
Her Safety sits not on a throne,
With CAPET or NAPOLEON !
But in equal rights and laws,
Hearts and hands in one great cause—
Freedom, such as God hath given
Unto all beneath his heaven,
With their breath, and from their birth,
Though Guilt would sweep it from the earth ;
With a fierce and lavish hand
Scattering nations' wealth like sand ;
Pouring nations' blood like water,
In imperial seas of slaughter !

V.

But the heart and the mind,
And the voice of mankind,
Shall arise in communion—
And who shall resist that proud union?
The time is past when swords subdu'd—
- Man may die—the soul's renew'd :
Even in this low world of care
Freedom ne'er shall want an heir;
Millions breathe but to inherit
Her for ever bounding spirit—
When once more her hosts assemble,
Tyrants shall believe and tremble—
Smile they at this idle threat?
Crimson tears will follow yet.

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

* All wept, but particularly Savary, and a Polish officer who had been exalted from the ranks by Bonaparte. He clung to his master's knees : wrote a letter to Lord Keith, entreating permission to accompany him, even in the most menial capacity, which could not be admitted. »

1.

Must thou go, my glorious Chief,
Severed from thy faithful few?
Who can tell thy warrior's grief,
Maddening o'er that long adieu?
Woman's love, and friendship's zeal,
Dear as both have been to me—
What are they to all I feel,
With a soldier's faith for thee?

2.

Idol of the soldier's soul !
First in fight, but mightiest now :
Many could a world control ;
Thee alone no doom can bow.
By thy side for years I dared
Death ; and envied those who fell,
When their dying shout was heard,
Blessing him they served so well. »

3.

Would that I were cold with those,
Since this hour I live to see ;
When the doubts of coward foes
Scarce dare trust a man with thee,
Dreading each should set thee free.
Oh ! although in dungeons pent,
All their chains were light to me,
Gazing on thy soul unbent.

4.

Would the sycophants of him
Now so deaf to duty's prayer,
Were his borrowed glories dim,
In his native darkness share ?
Were that world this hour his own,
All thou calmly dost resign,
Could he purchase with that throne
Hearts like those which still are thine ?

5.

My chief, my king, my friend, adieu !
Never did I droop before ;
Never to my sovereign sue,
As his foes I now implore.

All I ask is to divide
Every peril he must brave ;
Sharing by the hero's side
His fall, his exile, and his grave.

ON THE STAR OF « THE LEGION OF
HONOUR. »

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

I.

STAR of the brave!—whose beam hath shed
Such glory o'er the quick and dead—
Thou radiant and adored deceit!
Which millions rushed in arms to greet,—
Wild meteor of immortal birth!
Why rise in Heaven to set on Earth?

2.

Souls of slain heroes formed thy rays;
Eternity flashed through thy blaze;
The music of thy martial sphere
Was fame on high and honour here;
And thy light broke on human eyes,
Like a Volcano of the skies.

3.

Like lava rolled thy stream of blood,
And swept down empires with its flood;
Earth rocked beneath thee to her base,
As thou didst lighten through all space;
And the shorn Sun grew dim in air,
And set while thou wert dwelling there.

4.

Before thee rose, and with thee grew,
A rainbow of the loveliest hue
Of three bright colours,⁴ each divine,
And fit for that celestial sign;
For Freedom's hand had blended them,
Like tints in an immortal gem.

5.

One tint was of the sunbeam's dyes;
One, the blue depth of Seraph's eyes;
One, the pure Spirit's veil of white
Had robed in radiance of its light:
The three so mingled did beseem
The texture of a heavenly dream.

6.

Star of the brave! thy ray is pale,
And darkness must again prevail!

But, oh thou Rainbow of the free!
Our tears and blood must flow for thee.
When thy bright promise fades away,
Our life is but a load of clay.

7.

And Freedom hallows with her tread
The silent cities of the dead;
For beautiful in death are they
Who proudly fall in her array;
And soon, oh Goddess! may we be
For evermore with them or thee!

NAPOLEON'S FAREWELL.

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

I.

FAREWELL to the Land, where the gloom of my
Glory

Arose and o'ershadowed the earth with her name—
She abandons me now,—but the page of her story,
The brightest or blackest, is filled with my fame.
I have warred with a world which vanquished me
only

When the meteor of Conquest allured me too far;

I have coped with the nations which dread me thus
lonely,
The last single Captive to millions in war!

2.

Farewell to thee, France!—when thy diadem
crowned me,
I made thee the gem and the wonder of earth,—
But thy weakness decrees I should leave as I found
thee,
Decayed in thy glory, and sunk in thy worth.
Oh! for the veteran hearts that were wasted
In strife with the storm, when their battles were
won—
Then the Eagle, whose gaze in that moment was
blasted,
Had still soared with eyes fixed on victory's sun!

3.

Farewell to thee, France!—but when Liberty
rallies
Once more in thy regions, remember me then—
The violet still grows in the depth of thy valleys;
Though withered, thy tears will unfold it again—
Yet, yet, I may baffle the hosts that surround us,

And yet may thy heart leap awake to my voice—
There are links which must break in the chain that
 has bound us,
Then turn thee and call on the Chief of thy choice!

TO SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

ABSENT or present, still to thee,
 My friend, what magic spells belong!
As all can tell, who share, like me,
 In turn thy converse, and thy song.
But when the dreaded hour shall come
 By Friendship ever deemed too nigh,
And « MEMORY » o'er her Druid's tomb
 Shall weep that aught of thee can die,
How fondly will She then repay
 Thy homage offered at her shrine,
And blend, while Ages roll away,
 Her name immortally with *thine*!

April 19th, 1812.

MONODY ON THE DEATH OF THE RIGHT
HONOURABLE R. B. SHERIDAN.

Spoken at Drury Lane Theatre.

WHEN the last sunshine of expiring day
In summer's twilight weeps itself away,
Who hath not felt the softness of the hour
Sink on the heart, as dew along the flower?
With a pure feeling which absorbs and awes
While Nature makes that melancholy pause,
Her breathing moment on the bridge where Time
Of light and darkness forms an arch sublime,
Who hath not shared that calm so still and deep,
The voiceless thought which would not speak but
weep,

10

A holy concord—and a bright regret,
A glorious sympathy with suns that set?
'Tis not harsh sorrow—but a tenderer woe,
Nameless, but dear to gentle hearts below,
Felt without bitterness—but full and clear,
A sweet dejection—a transparent tear.
Unmixed with worldly grief or selfish stain,
Shed without shame—and secret without pain.

Even as the tenderness that hour instils
When Summer's day declines along the hills, 20
So feels the fulness of our heart and eyes
When all of Genius which can perish dies.
A mighty Spirit is eclipsed—a Power
Hath passed from day to darkness—to whose hour
Of light no likeness is bequeathed—no name,
Focus at once of all the rays of Fame!
The flash of Wit—the bright Intelligence,
The beam of Song—the blaze of Eloquence,
Set with their Sun—but still have left behind
The enduring produce of immortal Mind; 30
Fruits of a genial morn, and glorious noon,
A deathless part of him who died too soon.
But small that portion of the wondrous whole,
These sparkling segments of that circling soul,
Which all embraced—and lightened over all,
To cheer—to pierce—to please—or to appal.
From the charmed council to the festive board,
Of human feelings the unbounded lord;
In whose acclaim the loftiest voices vied,
The praised—the proud—who made his praise their
pride. 40

• 5 When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan
Arose to Heaven in her appeal from man,
His was the thunder—his the avenging rod,
The wrath—the delegated voice of God !
Which shook the nations through his lips—and
blazed
Till vanquished senates trembled as they praised.

And here, oh ! here, where yet all young and warm
The gay creations of his spirit charm,
The matchless dialogue—the deathless wit,
Which knew not what it was to intermit; 50
The glowing portraits, fresh from life, that bring
Home to our hearts the truth from which they
spring;

These wondrous beings of his Fancy, wrought
To fulness by the fiat of his thought,
Here in their first abode you still may meet,
Bright with the hues of his Promethean heat;
A halo of the light of other days,
Which still the splendour of its orb betrays.

But should there be to whom the fatal blight
Of failing Wisdom yields a base delight, 60

Men who exult when minds of heavenly tone
Jar in the music which was born their own,
Still let them pause—Ah! little do they know
That what to them seemed Vice might be but Woe.
Hard is his fate on whom the public gaze
Is fixed for ever to detract or praise;
Repose denies her requiem to his name,
And Folly loves the martyrdom of Fame.
The secret enemy whose sleepless eye
Stands sentinel—accuser—judge—and spy, 70
The foe—the fool—the jealous—and the vain,
The envious who but breathe in others' pain,
Behold the host! delighting to deprave,
Who track the steps of Glory to the grave,
Watch every fault that daring Genius owes
Half to the ardour which its birth bestows,
Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,
And pile the Pyramid of Calumny!

These are his portion—but if joined to these
Gaunt Poverty should league with deep Disease,
If the high Spirit must forget to soar, 81
And stoop to strive with Misery at the door,

To soothe Indignity—and face to face
Meet sordid Rage—and wrestle with Disgrace,
To find in Hope but the renewed caress,
The serpent-fold of further Faithlessness,—
If such may be the Ills which men assail,
What marvel if at last the mightiest fail?
Breasts to whom all the strength of feeling given
Bear hearts electric—charged with fire from

Heaven,

90

Black with the rude collision, inly torn,
By clouds surrounded, and on whirlwinds borne,
Driven o'er the lowering Atmosphere that nurst
Thoughts which have turned to thunder—scorch—
and burst.

But far from us and from our mimic scene
Such things should be—if such have ever been ;
Our's be the gentler wish, the kinder task,
To give the tribute Glory need not ask,
To mourn the vanished beam—and add our mite
Of praise in payment of a long delight. 100

Ye Orators! whom yet our councils yield,
Mourn for the veteran Hero of your field!
The worthy rival of the wondrous *Three!*⁶

Whose words were sparks of Immortality !
Ye Bards ! to whom the Drama's Muse is dear,
He was your Master—emulate him *here* !
Ye men of wit and social eloquence !
He was your Brother—bear his ashes hence !
While Powers of Mind almost of boundless range,
Complete in kind—as various in their change, 110
While Eloquence—Wit—Poesy—and Mirth,
That humbler Harmonist of care on Earth,
Survive within our souls—while lives our sense
Of pride in Merit's proud pre-eminence,
Long shall we seek his likeness—long in vain,
And turn to all of him which may remain,
Sighing that Nature formed but one such man,
And broke the die—in moulding Sheridan ! 118

NOTES.

Note 1, page 210, line 17.

Turning rivers into blood.

See Rev. chap. viii. verse 7, etc. « The first angel sounded, and there followed fire and hail mingled with blood, » etc.

Verse 8. « And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood, » etc.

Verse 10. « And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp; and it fell upon a third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters, »

Verse 11. « And the name of the star is called *Wormwood*: and the third part of the waters became *wormwood*; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. »

Note 2, page 211, line 12.

Whose realm refused thee even a tomb.

Murat's remains are said to have been torn from the grave and burnt.

Note 3, page 215, line 16.

Blessing him they served so well.

« At Waterloo, one man was seen, whose left arm was shattered by a cannon ball, to wrench it off with the other, and throwing it up in the air, exclaimed to his comrades, 'Vive l'Empereur jusqu'à la mort.' There were many other instances of the like: this you may, however, depend on as true. »

A private letter from Brussels.

Note [4](#), page [218](#), line [9](#).

Of three bright colours, each divine.

The tri-colour.

Note [5](#), page [224](#), line [1](#).

When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan.

See Fox, Burke, and Pitt's eulogy on Mr. Sheridan's speech on the charges exhibited against Mr. Hastings in the House of Commons. Mr. Pitt entreated the House to adjourn, to give time for a calmer consideration of the question than could then occur after the immediate effect of that oration.

Note [6](#), page [226](#), line [23](#).

The worthy rival of the wondrous Three!

Fox—Pitt—Burke.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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